No. 1051
5 April –
18 April 2002
£1.20

PRIVATE EYE

THATCHER SHOCK

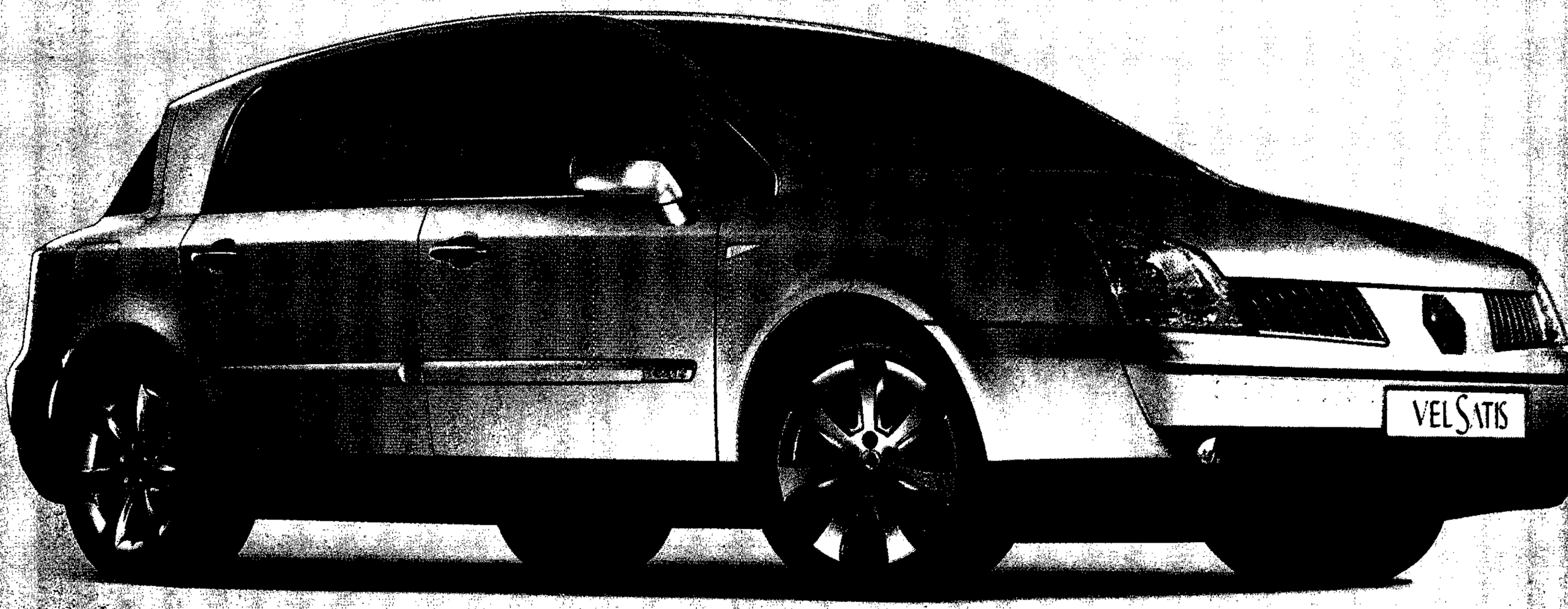
CRÉATEUR D'AUTOMOBILES

RENAULT VEL SATIS

Naturally, the new Vel Satis boasts everything you'd expect of an executive saloon – an outstandingly powerful and flexible engine choice including what 'Fleet World' described as "the most refined and responsive diesel we've ever tested". But with the Vel Satis, Renault has also redefined luxury motoring with an exceptionally roomy cabin that's 13 cms taller than the class average. While its revolutionary Trigonal rear suspension system simply means more comfort and less noise. All of which makes for a sumptuously different take on luxury, whichever way you look at it.

For more details call 0800 072 3373
or visit www.renault.co.uk

Live the difference.



RENAULT recommend eif The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the 3.0 V6 dCi are: Urban 23.5 (12.0), Extra Urban 41.5 (6.8), Combined 32.5 (8.7). The official CO_2 emission is 232g/km.

Gnome

I AM sad to have to announce that Gnome Digital has now gone into the hands of the administrators Messrs Sackham and Shreddit, due to "technical difficulties".

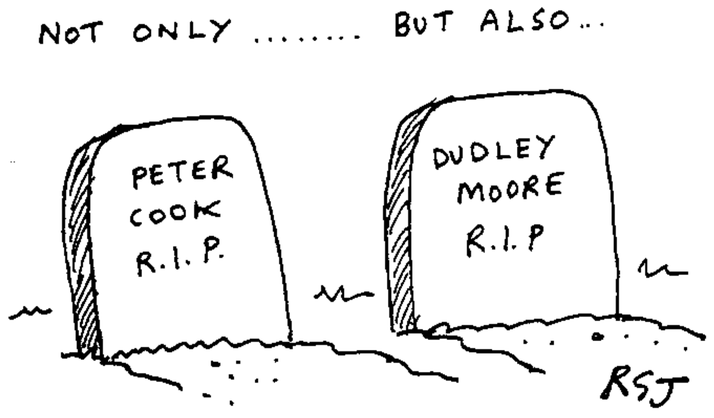
Meanwhile, a large number of football clubs have been making unsubstantiated allegations to the effect that I offered them £580 million in order to televise their matches.

I am informed by my lawyers that I did indeed make such offers, but the fact remains that the managers of these clubs should never have believed me.

The responsibility therefore lies entirely with them. No football matches could possibly produce such a ludicrous amount of money. Particularly when no one in their right mind would want to watch Brighton vs. Crewe (whatever they may be) when shown on television at inappropriate times, such as when everyone is in the pub watching Man Utd vs. Liverpool on Sky TV.

If these clubs find themselves forced to close down as a result of their greed and naïvety, then so be it.

E. Strobes
pp Lord Gnome
C/o Gnome Digital
The Monkey Business Centre
Carey Street



SUBSCRIPTION RATES
£19 per annum. Europe and Eire £27. Airmail (rest of world) £35. Cheques/POs to Private Eye. Access/Visa.

PRIVATE EYE SUBSCRIPTIONS
Mortimer House, 230-236 Lavender Hill, London SW11 1LE.
Tel: 020-7228 0588. Fax: 020-7924 3719.
Email: subscriptions@private-eye.co.uk

EDITORIAL
6 Carlisle Street, London W1D 3BN. Tel: 020-7437 4017.
Fax: 020-7437 0705. Email: strobes@private-eye.co.uk.
http://www.private-eye.co.uk

ADVERTISING
Tel: 020-7923 5402

Published by Pressdram Ltd, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1D 3BN. **Printed** by Goodhead Print Group plc, Bicester OX6 7QZ . **Distributed** by P.E. Distributions, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1D 3BN.
020 7437 4017.

ABC

Leaves you speechless

- *Hackwatch at the Oscars* 5
- *How Beckett cons the country: HP Sauce* 6
- *Mishcon Impossible: Archer legal news* 7
- *Damascene conversion? Syria after Assad* 15
- *Spring books special* 24, 25
- *Paddick; Lockerbie; Lord Ahmed and the baby milk scandal: In the Back* 26, 27
- *A right Balli-hoo for Lamont? See Slicker* 28

IN THE TEAROOM

THERE's a spring in his step. A twinkle in his eye. Just a hint of self-satisfaction in that lop-sided smile. Gordon Brown is on a roll.

Partly it's because he's excited about his forthcoming budget – one he's confident will restore this government's popularity and confound its critics. And, perhaps, just a touch of *Schadenfreude* too. There's nothing like seeing his next door neighbour and "best friend in politics" having a hard time to convince the chancellor that all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds.

More cheer arrives with the news that his succession looks more secure than ever. The balloon that was David Blunkett's leadership ambition has been deftly popped. What's more, the chancellor's enemies cannot even come up with one major league cabinet member to rival him. The only plausible name in the frame is that of party chairman Charles Clarke, a minister without portfolio who's never run a department and has only been in the Commons since 1997. Just the kind of competition Gordon needs: an inveterate scruffball who makes the chancellor look dapper by comparison; a politician with a "good face for radio", who'd be pushed to match the permanent secretary at the department of pensions in the name-recognition stakes. So that's all right, then.

But is it? Suddenly that cloud of black Scottish pessimism descends.

Clarke's Norwich sidekick Ian Gibson is showing Tony the yellow card. Someone must have put him up to it. And what sinister role is being played by the wily David Triesman, Labour's general secretary? He and Clarke seem inseparable these days. Between them they own the Millbank "monstering" machine. They keep the membership lists. And where are all the union leaders Gordon's been cultivating these past years at his regular soirées? Huddled with Clarke and Triesman over a bottle of wine... plotting, I'll warrant. The chancellor's spirits sink. His face settles back into its customary scowl. It's politics as usual at Number 11.

'Urquhart'

COURT CIRCULAR

THE QUEEN has turned down a suggestion from Tony Blair that might have helped him with his difficulties over hunting – though "suggestion" might be too strong a word given the simpering manner Mr Tony adopts in Brenda's company. Would she mind awfully, inquired the PM, asking the royals to give up huntin', shootin' and fishin' for the time being?

Brenda gave this idea very short shrift. The woman who went hunting with her father in childhood, shot her first stag when she was 16, has followed hunts all her life and famously wrings the necks of wounded pheasants, is not about to change the habits of a lifetime to help the Rev Blair out of a hole. And it would be a braver soul than Tony Blair who would contemplate even asking Charles and Philip to stop the slaughter of things furred, feathered or finned.

Buckingham Palace's media machine has also been pondering the hunting issue and wondering if the sight of royals killing animals is quite the right image to project these days, although when they mooted the subject they too were left in no doubt of Brenda's views.

'Flunkey'

MORE on Capita, the *Eye*'s favourite private finance initiative firm, and the fire that destroyed the Yarls Wood immigration detention centre (see *Eye* 1049).

Not only did Capita earn fees by helping the home office "procure" the centre, but it now emerges that Capita will also earn fees by obliging the police (ie the taxpayer) to stump up for the fire.

The home office paid Crapita a large sum to help it buy Yarls Wood from Amey and Group 4, who originally built and ran the centre. Somehow, none of the parties involved insisted on a sprinkler system, though. And now the centre has burnt down, Capita is earning fees again by trying to pass the £38m cost of the fire to the police.

D.J. Pye, the insurer for Group 4 and Amey, is insisting the police must pay for the damage and citing the obscure riot (damages) act of 1886, which makes police liable for damage caused in riots. However, the firm pursuing the police on behalf of the insurers is Capita McLaren, an insurance services company and a division of... Crapita!

Meanwhile Capita has also been involved in setting up the £40m Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). It finally opened at the beginning of March after a year delay – but only to those employers who already had access to police security checks.

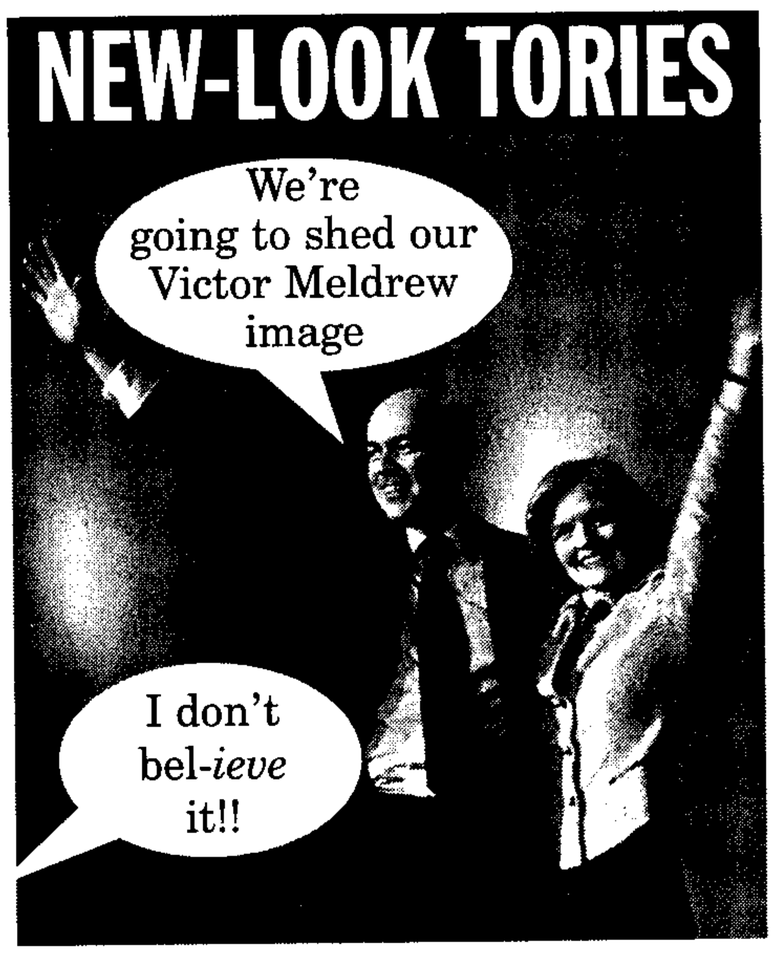
Other organisations whose employees work with under-18s or vulnerable adults had to pay a registration fee and wait until the start of April. Everybody else must wait until some time in "summer 2002" when the long-promised access to a basic check on any unspent criminal convictions will finally be available.

The long delay is due mainly to IT problems, which comes as little surprise considering the CRB's private sector partner is you know who.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"ONdigital is a low cost, low risk investment in the rapidly growing pay TV market."

— Gerry Robinson, chairman of Granada, which with Carlton launched ONDigital — and has now lost around £800m. (Granada Group plc annual report, 1998.)



NEWS

THE British company AMEC has pulled out of bidding for the contract to build the controversial Yusufeli dam in north east Turkey for "commercial" reasons, although the desire to avoid further bad publicity no doubt played an equally large part (see *Eyes passim*).

The hydro-electric project which would displace 15,000 people mainly from Turkey's Georgian minority from their homes and indirectly affect a further 15,000 as well as having a negative impact on the surrounding environment has attracted widespread criticism, so AMEC's decision must come as a relief to the government's export credits guarantee department (ECGD) from which the company was seeking £68m in financial backing.

But the Yusufeli dam may yet be built. The Civil Works Group led by French company SPIE Batignolles, of which AMEC was part, is still competing against two other consortiums for the contract. By a strange coincidence AMEC owns 46 per cent of the shares in SPIE and has the option to buy it outright in July.

THE authorities at Kingston University in Surrey were surprised to read in the *Eye* that Serco had been awarded the contract to run the ballistic missile warning system at RAF Fylingdales in Yorkshire.

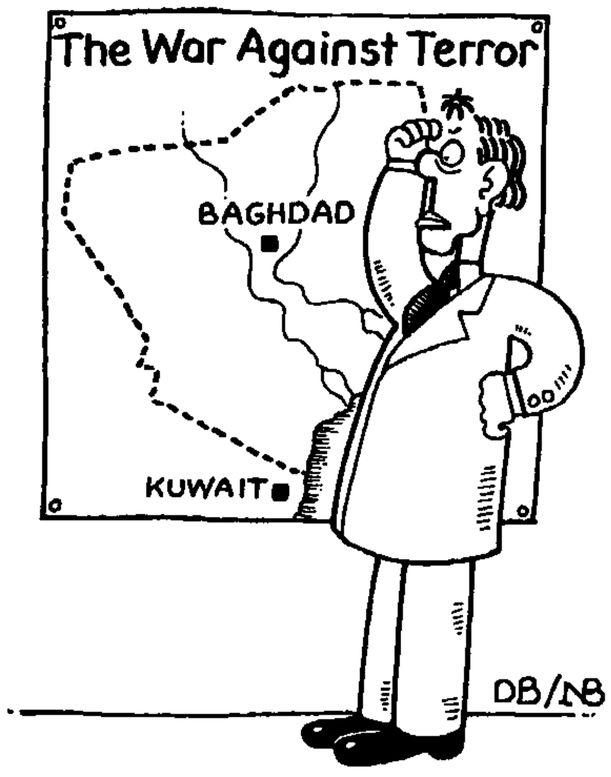
Serco once had a "pioneering" facilities management contract with the university, but its performance was so appalling, and the effect on university administration so catastrophic, the firm had to be sacked.

That sort of record is unlikely to depress John Williams, former executive director of the New Local Government Network, however. He has just been appointed market development director for Serco, where he hopes to develop many more markets for the firm in local government.

Serco already provides financial backing and lays on meetings, conferences and policy forums for local government, but Mr William's new appointment can only bring in more new business in this profitable area.

PS: A main board non-executive director of Serco is Ralph Hodge, who got a CBE for all the hard work he did as chairman of Enron Europe (now bust).

NEW WORLD SAYINGS



Caught between Iraq and a hard place

Street Of Shame

AMAZING HUMBUG AWARD

THE cover-story in Australian newsmagazine *The Bulletin* two weeks ago was a lengthy interview with Lachlan Murdoch, gormless son and wannabe heir to the Dirty Digger. Noting that the rival Fairfax group "rarely misses an opportunity to stick it to the Murdochs", the interviewer asked Lachlan if he'd care to return the compliment.

Indeed he would. "I think Fairfax is the worst run business," he raged. "The media is not only about making money. It's a business which is exciting but it's a business that carries huge social responsibility, and it's a responsibility we take very seriously. When my half-sister, Grace, was born, a *Financial Review* journalist wrote a piece saying the Murdochs would all be immediately phoning their lawyers. It was an outrageous piece when we were all extremely happy. My father was extremely happy and we were all very pleased for him. It's a beautiful thing. It's the kind of speculation that makes for good copy but if it's not accurate, if it's not real at all, then it's just journalistically unethical."

Phew! No doubt many victims of Rupert Murdoch's own brand of ethical journalism are wondering when Lachlan will mention this remarkable discovery to his dad.

FINAL confirmation, if any were needed, that the *Telegraph*'s roving European correspondent Ambrose Evans-Pritchard is completely bonkers.

Evans-Pritchard, as *Eye* readers will recall, spent most of the 90s in Washington trying to link Bill Clinton with everything from the Kennedy assassination to the Rue Morgue murders. Now he has received a handsome tribute from David Brock, a former fellow Clinton-baiter from the *American Spectator*.

"Of all the 'Clinton crazies' I would meet – the term was one that Ambrose and many others openly embraced – Ambrose was the least cynical and perhaps the craziest," Brock writes in his new book, *Blinded by the Right*. "He seemed to truly credit the seamy gossip that I now knew anyone could hear if they poked around Arkansas for a few days. Ambrose had no capacity to judge the credibility of sources; to him, the word of a drug-addled ex-con was as good as anybody else's, or perhaps better. I began to think that Ambrose had spent too much time in Nicaragua…"

Brock goes on to describe a visit to Ambrose's Maryland house to discuss the *Telegraph* hack's fantastic allegation that prison wardens had been ordered to make inmates available to the president for his sexual gratification. "When we arrived at the house, a sparsely furnished suburban rambler, Ambrose drew the shades and asked if we had been followed. The CIA, he was sure, had tapped his phones, and he believed his house was under surveillance by the Clintons' 'death squads'. A few minutes into the conversation, it was apparent to me that poor Ambrose had lost his grip on reality." Brock then describes the intrepid newshound's efforts to invoke a "self-discrediting witness" in his bid to prove that the Clinton administration murdered the former presidential aide, Vince Foster.

No doubt it was this record of sane and diligent reporting that made Charles Moore decide Ambrose was the ideal man to deliver the dispassionate coverage of Europe for which the *Daily Telegraph* is renowned.

THE "cash for places" scandal at Pembroke College, Oxford, uncovered by a *Sunday Times* reporter, captured the imagination of rival newspaper the *Daily Telegraph*.

The day after the row, the *Torygraph* devoted a front page report, a full inside page and an editorial to the story, illustrating its coverage with a picture of the college. Unfortunately in its intense excitement the *Torygraph's* picture desk dug out a photograph of Pembroke College, Cambridge.

HACKS at the London *Evening Standard* liken the new regime under editor Veronica Wadley to Orwell's *1984* – every time they go into the office there's another person missing.

Wadley and her deputy Ian MacGregor are still hard at work turning the London paper into a metropolian supplement of the *Daily Mail*. Reporters are now regularly discouraged from stories which would require illustrations of poor people, fat people or ugly people. Instead, well-heeled lovelies are the order of the day from the picture desk.

They've also been told that the words "London" and "capital" are banned from the first two paragraphs of any news article – apparently they make the *Standard* sound too parochial. The fact that the paper is supposedly serving London, the, er, capital of the UK, seems to have escaped the new bosses. Any respite from the gruelling work regime is out of the question and lunch is for wimps at the new *Standard*. MacGregor leads by example, arriving at 5am, taking a half hour break at 5pm and finally disappearing home an hour after that. "It's like working for a bloody Dalek," says one sleep-starved journo.

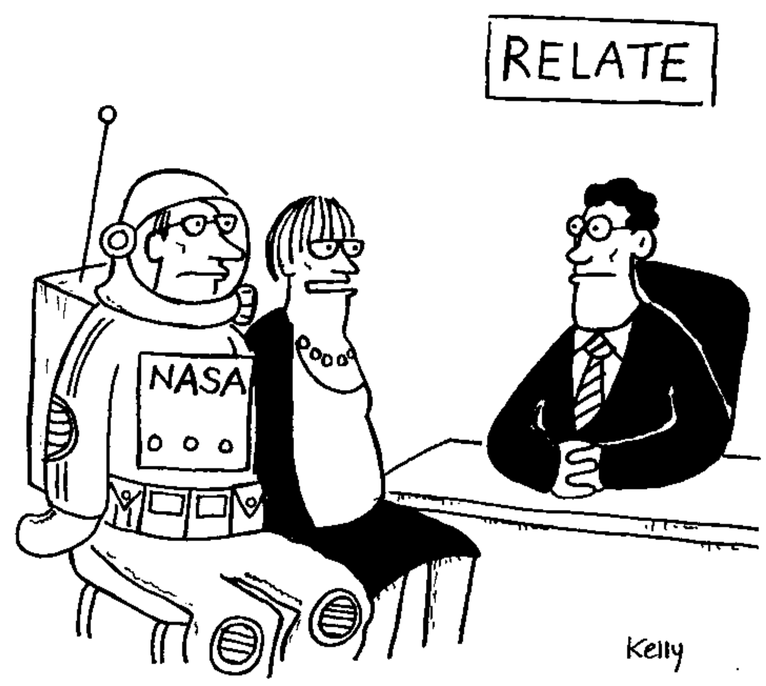
More news from the *Standard* frontline next issue.

A TREMENDOUS scoop in the *News of the World* of 24 March: "Vile pop paedophile Jonathan King has been beaten up in prison and left with a broken nose, a fractured wrist and two black eyes." The attack took place "at London's tough Belmarsh prison… 10 days ago", and King had now been sent to Maidstone jail to have his nose re-set.

Yet, alas! King claims to have been transferred from Belmarsh to Maidstone several weeks earlier. "I didn't have black eyes or fractured wrists and, anyway, would never be rushed to Maidstone to 'reset my broken nose' since it's one of the few prisons in Britain without a hospital wing," the vile pop paedophile himself points out in a letter to Lord Gnome.

"I suspect their rubbish was aimed at only one reader – me – in a desperate attempt to persuade me not to reveal all the cocaine snorting, underage sex parties and homosexual perversions amongst executives and journalists I witnessed at first hand during the five years I worked for News International, writing a weekly page for the *Sun*."

Who on earth do we believe? The vile pop paedophile or the crusading, investigative journalists on the *News of the World*? It is a terrible dilemma.



"He says he needs space"

THE rumour that bosses at the *Independent* are about to announce a pay freeze has been met with groaning resignation by *Indy* hacks, who say their pay has effectively been frozen for years anyway, with the exception of a 1 percent rise last year. But it has not stopped the paper's fledgling union from calling for a strike.

Meanwhile the *Indy's* "top secret" redesign has been delayed for a few more weeks, leaving hacks wondering if it will go ahead at all and where the money's coming from (their wages, presumably). The plan at present is for the second section to go tabloid and comment to move back into the first section, resulting in acres of space which the impoverished features department cannot afford to fill.

SO DESPERATE is Richard "Dirty" Desmond to stem the tide of falling sales of his adult magazines that two weeks ago he took personal charge of the smut publishing empire. The first decision was to relaunch all his tired magazines under the new banner "Red Hot Publications". His second brainwave was better still: to change the name of *Posh Wives* magazine to... *Spunk Loving Sluts!*

It seems improbable that W. H. Smiths or John Menzies will be happy to take the new title. And readers are not likely be disappointed, as the contents will be the same old recycled photos. A more apt name would be *Spunk Loving Stiffs*: Dirty Des's strap-line – "the hottest in Britain" – clearly refers to the heat from the crematoria disposing of ageing 1970s models.

Meanwhile, on hearing that the porn-group run by his former lieutenant Deric Botham is launching *50-UP* to compete with *50&Over*, one of his better selling magazines, and *Park Lane International* to compete with *For Men*, the old pornster has gone ballistic. In a somewhat acrimonious meeting Desmond announced that from now on all smut magazines must be personally passed by himself, or in his absence Martin "Rottweiler" Ellice, as he is of the opinion that everyone else involved in the magazines is a "totally incompetent cunt".

Poor old Dirty Des. After all those valiant efforts to go respectable he ends up back where he started – neck deep in porn. Whether his new best friends Tony and Cherie Blair will be sent a complimentary copy of *Spunk Loving Sluts!* remains to be seen.

***EXPRESS* proprietor Richard Desmond rents his Grey Lubyanka on Blackfriars Bridge from milord Hollick's United Media, former owner of the paper. But it seems he expects the ex-proprietors to help their seedy successors in other ways too.**

Hence the furious memo to United Media from Dirty Des's henchman Martin "Rottweiler" Ellice, joint md of the *Express*. "As you know, we pay for the services provided by the receptionists," he wrote. "We have noticed lately that the receptionists have been reading copies of the *Sun* and *Daily Mail* whilst on duty."

Alas, this wouldn't do; and Ellice demanded that the receptionists be forbidden from reading anything at all while on duty... even copies of *Asian Babes,* which could have helped corporate promotion.

Elsewhere in the Street of Shame there has been incredulity at Des's plan to publish a Sunday edition of the *Daily Star*. He predicts it will "wipe out the *Sunday People*". But since Desmond never invests ("he thinks 'investment' is a clergyman's clothing", a colleague explains), the *Sunday Star* will be put together by the same tiny team that already produces everything else – 10 hacks, a dog and one internet connection. Of these, it's the latter that will be relied upon to provide most of the copy. As one staffer muttered last week: "If the *Guardian* website goes down, we're fucked."

Despite the general penny-pinching – at the *Daily Express* the website has been closed and hacks are threatening to strike over pay – Dirty Des doesn't mind splashing out to buy up domain names, it seems. In the last month Sharon Lodge of the *Express* legal department has bought Richarddesmond.net as well as .org, .info, .biz, .uk and .com. Alas, she was too late to snaffle www.Richarddesmond.org.uk – already owned by Homo Promos, London's oldest gay theatre group!

HACKWATCH
At The Oscars

Best supporting hackette

★ TIRELESS social climber Victoria Mather, thrilled to be invited to the *Vanity Fair* party, repaid the debt with a whole page in the London *Evening Standard* describing the bash as "the most stylish, fabulous and schmoozy social gathering that Hollywood has ever experienced", "the hottest ticket in town" and "the greatest show on earth". Mather's extended thank-you letter to her host, *VF* editor Graydon Carter, also noted that although Nicole Kidman, Denzel Washington, Gwyneth Paltrow and Diana Ross attended, "the real star of the night, of course, was Graydon Carter". As if that weren't gratitude enough, she even worked in an extended plug for a new documentary Carter has produced. "He's more Hollywood than Hollywood," she sighed.

Worst supporting actress

★ NO male hack would be permitted to comment on a Hollywood star's breasts but the fashion hackettes have no such inhibition. "Gwyneth Paltrow should not have forsaken her bra," Hilary Alexander suggested politely in the *Telegraph*. Laura Craik of the *Evening Standard* was more blunt: "There was still the odd – very odd – show of flesh. Like Gwyneth Paltrow's breasts – for which droopy isn't the word."

Best original work of fiction

★ WHO else but the *Mirror*'s 3am Girls, Jessica Callan and Eva Simpson? The gals, of whom no one in America has ever heard, set the tone with their eve-of-ceremony despatch from Hollywood: "Everyone wanted us. But where were we to go? Would we grace the American magazine *Vanity Fair*'s annual bash at Morton's with our dazzling presence? [Unlikely, since they weren't on the guest list.] Or maybe the Miramax studio's much-sought-after Mondrian Hotel 'do' would get lucky. [Ditto.] So many invitations, and so little time to decide... In the end it was the charm of 3am's old friend Sir Elton John that swung it for us." Which turned out to mean that they were permitted to attend Elton's party in return for a hefty donation from the *Mirror* to his Aids charity.

The following day, their full-page report on the Oscars was dominated by the most important event of the night: when Elton John was interviewed live on BBC breakfast news at six in the morning (English time), before a nationwide TV audience of eight insomniacs, the girls had been distinctly visible in the background. "Jessica and Eva remained on screen throughout the star's British TV slot," the awestruck *Mirror* revealed.

Best wardrobe adviser

★ AFTER praising Kate Winslet's Ben de Lisi dress, Brenda Polan of the *Daily Mail* added that it was "a pity Jodie Foster hasn't made Ben's acquaintance. Her Armani frock was a tad too simple, permitting unnecessary droop". Readers of the *Express*, however, were assured by fashion expert Margi Conklin that "only one word sums up Jodie's whole look: fantastic... She looks feminine and sexy."

Trudi Styler also caught the eye. "She arrived at the Oscars in an exquisite Gaultier gown with lace cuffs and velvet collar," the *Sun*'s fashion team drooled. "A sure hit, although only someone with Trudi's confidence can carry it off." Margi Conklin of the *Express*, by contrast, concluded that "Sting's wife gets it wrong so many times she should really be called Trudie No-Styler. The creation looks as if it has been assembled from scraps of material picked up from a dress designer's floor."

Best British adaptation

★ ALTHOUGH most British nominees failed to win, Sarah Sands's patriotic fervour was undimmed – as befits the deputy editor of the *Daily Telegraph*. "There was something about the West Coast fervour of these Oscars that brought out the character of the English," she gushed. "Emma Kitchener-Fellowes was the great British discovery." Emma, the wife of *Gosford Park* writer Julian Fellowes, is a toff, you see – a "handsome, six-foot Sloane" who acts as a lady-in-waiting to Princess Michael of Kent. How can Nicole Kidman, Cameron Diaz or Jennifer Lopez possibly compete?

Best hair-stylist

★ PRIME example of a "bad-hair day", according to Hilary Alexander of the *Telegraph*, was Julia Roberts, who had "caught her hair back in a pony tail that left a strange shag around her face... 'Bed hair' – as the grungy tousled look has been dubbed – might be in fashion, but it should never go near a red carpet." Meanwhile, high on the list of best-dressed actresses compiled by the *Guardian*'s fashion editor Jess Cartner-Morley was... Julia Roberts, who looked "thoroughly modern in a slinky number and simple ponytail".

Best animated feature

★ "THREE black actors are up for the top acting prize at this year's Academy Awards," Bonnie Greer reported in the *New Statesman* two days before Oscar night. "It should be a cause for rejoicing. Instead it points to the appalling racism in the film industry today." And for why? Because there was no chance of their winning. "The three nominations – aside from [Halle] Berry there is Will Smith for *Ali* and Denzel Washington for *Training Day* – are, according to most black people in Hollywood, just that: three nominations, nothing more or less." As Greer concluded: "Think of it – four black people on 24 March, posing together for the press backstage after the ceremony: Sidney Poitier with his Special Achievement Oscar; Halle Berry, Best Actress; Will Smith or Denzel Washington, Best Actor; and past Oscar winner and compere Whoopi Goldberg. In your dreams."

★★★

DEFRA TO REASON

CRITICS were rightly scornful of the vacuous statement issued by rural affairs minister Margaret Beckett after Tony Blair's recent Downing Street "seminar" on the future of British farming.

A *Daily Telegraph* editorial described Mrs Beckett's jargon-ridden list of "farming initiatives" as "a parody", and like "something dreamed up by *Private Eye*". But what the *Telegraph* and everyone else missed was the central confidence trick Beckett is hoping to work, not just on farmers but on the media and everyone else.

Defra's "Big Idea", dutifully parroted by the Curry report on the future of British agriculture, is to switch farming subsidies away from food production to "maintaining the environment" (code for "keeping the countryside looking tidy for tourists"). Defra wants to transfer £220m of the £2.2bn it gets back annually from Brussels (out of £5.5bn sent there by UK taxpayers to pay for farm subsidies in the first place) away from direct grants to farmers and into the so-called "rural development fund" (RDF).

One problem is that most of the money taken away from farmers to be put into the RDF would go not to improving the environment but to regional development agencies, simply to pay for propaganda, consultants, "marketing schemes" and hiring more officials. In France, which already claims five times more than Britain from the RDF, almost all the money does go to farmers.

A second problem, over which Beckett is being noticeably coy, is that, under EU rules, all funding to the RDF has to be matched pound-for-pound by the treasury. The word from George Street is that, having already handed over £2.50 to Brussels for every £1 Britain gets back in farm subsidies, Gordon Brown is flatly refusing to play ball. So the net result of Beckett's Big Idea is that (a) it would achieve none of the results she claims; and (b) it is not going to happen anyway.

PS: In our last issue we inadvertently misprinted the website revealing devastating new official figures on the foot-and-mouth cock-up which played a part in the Lords' shock defeat of the government's animal health bill, leaving ministers "incandescent". The correct address is www.warmwell.com

TONY BENN was on sparkling off-message form over the weekend when he spoke to Labour peace campaigners in St Pancras.

"I saw Iain Duncan Smith at Peter Shore's memorial service recently," he recounted. "Now I'm not going to join the Tories like Richard Balfe, but IDS is trying to resurrect the old One Nation Tory Party of Disraeli, which puts him to the left of 'new' Labour. His spin doctors seem a bit more clued up than 'new' Labour's."

Benn, who recently completed a nationwide lecture tour which has filled theatres and halls from Guildford to Cambridge, revealed that he had recently had an interesting conversation with Tory party chairman David Davis MP. "Everyone says the public meeting is dying," said Benn, "but they're wrong of course. The public meeting is coming back into fashion, so I suggested to David Davis that we debate and share a platform, speak for 10 minutes and then answer questions. I'm still waiting for him to come back to me."

OLD Labour diners at the Gay Hussar have been shocked to learn that the restaurant has invited disgraced former minister Peter Mandelson to pose for a cartoon to be drawn by Martin Rowson, which it is planned will grace the walls of the dining place frequented by Michael Foot and assorted trade union general secretaries.

A restaurant spokesman is defensive. "Next year marks the 50th anniversary of the Gay Hussar, and we wish to mount a good number of regulars and hang them from the walls – including Peter Mandelson."

The decision has enraged one particular comrade. "This is outrageous. It is enough to have a framed print of Mandy's grandfather Herbert Morrison on the wall. We will mount a picket if Mandelson decides to turn up."

HAVING beaten cancer last year, Lib Dem transport spokesman Don Foster hopes to have many good years in him yet. But there are whispers in his Bath constituency that Foster, who will be nearly 60 come the next general election, may be thinking of stepping down.

Chief among the whisperers is ambitious but untalented Bath Lib Dem councillor and *Times* obituary writer Tim Bullamore, who has had his eye on Foster's seat for some time. Bullamore's profile has been raised recently by a series of sycophantic pieces in the local rag, the *Bath Chronicle*.

The fact that in a former life Bullamore spent eight years as personal assistant to the *Chronic*'s editor, Dave Gledhill, is entirely unconnected.

WHEN Iain Duncan Smith took office, he told his people not to talk to diary reporters.

So when the *Daily Telegraph's* Peterborough column printed a couple of harmless stories about the Tory leader recently – one regarding his diverse ancestry and another about his time in the army – *Torygraph* diarists didn't expect the great man to pay much attention.

They were proved wrong when an infuriated IDS and sidekick Owen Paterson quickly got on the blower to Charles "Snoots" Moore demanding *Peterbore* stop writing about him instantly. Snoots, by all accounts, politely declined their request.

JUST FANCY THAT!

"It was noticeable that in its report of the Tory leader's remarks yesterday, *The Times* even got the name of Mr Duncan Smith's 12-year-old wrong. She is Alicia, not Alice."

— Daily Telegraph, 23 March, p. 26

"The Tory leader has never been photographed in public with his children — Edward, 14, Alice, 12, Harry, 11, and Rosanna, eight — even though there were repeated requests during last summer's leadership elections."

— Daily Telegraph, 23 March, p. 13

ARGIE BARGY

NOT for the first time diplomats at the Argentine embassy in Belgrave Square have shot themselves in the feet.

April, the 20th anniversary of the South Atlantic conflict, sees publication by Bloomsbury of the second edition of *The land that lost its heroes: How Argentina lost the Falklands War* by Jimmy Burns, one of the more interesting writers on the *FT* and a winner of the Somerset Maugham Award.

The book was to have been launched at Canning House, opposite the embassy and a place subsidised by British taxpayers to help Anglo-Latin American relations. The idea was to have a conciliatory party with Brits, Argies and Falklanders all slurping wine in the same room; and this was agreed in principle by the friendlies, including Tim Rumboll of the Anglo-Argentine Society.

However, organisers forgot the power of Argentine diplomacy. The diplomats, still apparently smarting from some home truths written by Burns in the Pink 'Un about Diego Maradona and the egregiously bent former President Menem, vetoed the idea of any collaboration. Canning House's management was told to demand £800 for the use of the hall. It asked too much and the party's off.

Perhaps the diplomats have forgotten that for some months now their country has been bankrupt and is unable to pay its massive debts… and really it needs all the friends it can get right now.

ANTI-SEMITISM UPDATE

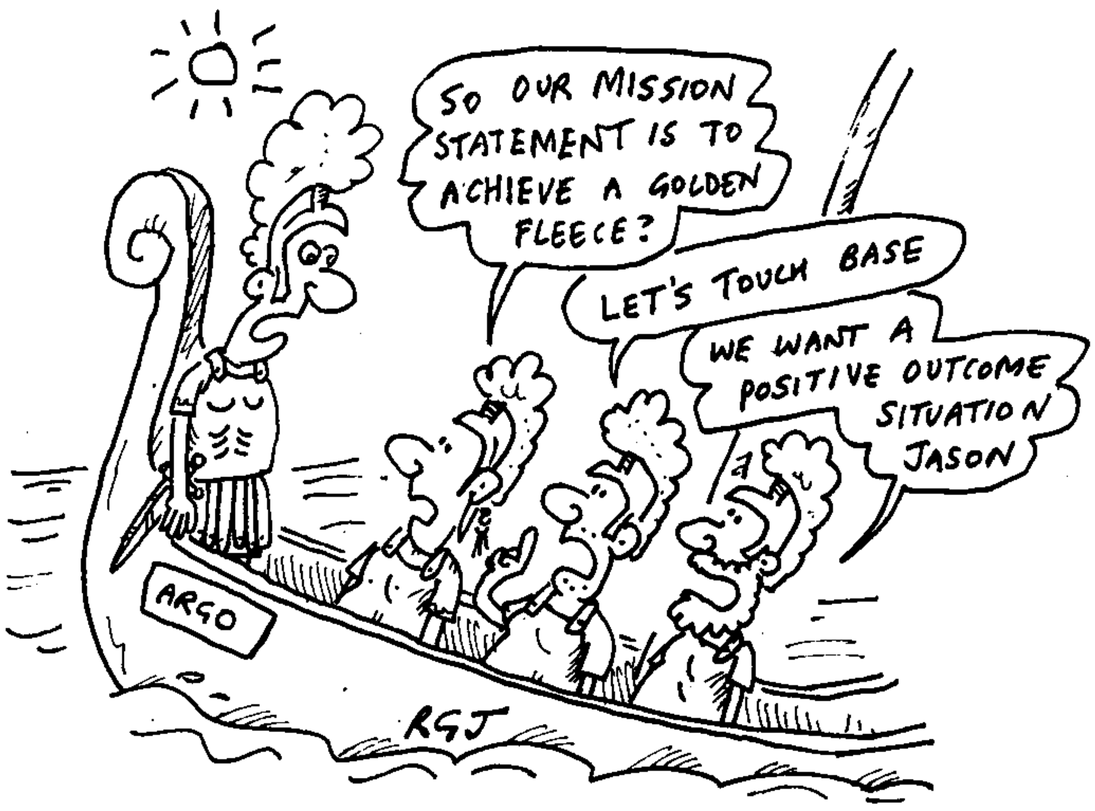
LADY Michele Renouf, the supporter of right-wing historian David Irving, is in trouble again. She says the author of a mysterious email she has circulated to friends alleging a Jewish conspiracy in the British media is probably Jewish himself "because they like to promote the concept of anti-semitism".

The email, apparently sent to Renouf with no covering note, is said to have been written by one "Thomas Sparks". Renouf says she doesn't know a Thomas Sparks and is unable to throw any light on his identity. Nevertheless, she decided to pass on his bonkers 11-page analysis of the British media to interested friends.

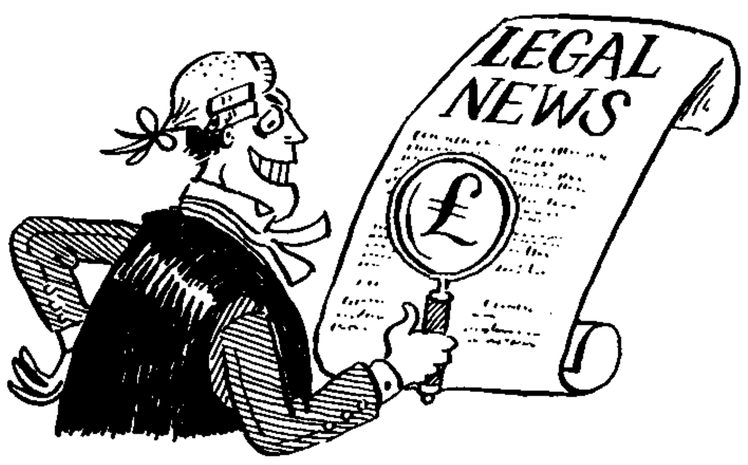
Renouf became famous for defending Irving after the *Times* revealed in April 2000 that he had attended a private dinner at the Reform Club at her invitation (*see Eyes passim*). The economic and current affairs club dinner took place shortly after Irving was deemed to be a racist and anti-semite by a high court judge when he lost his libel action against Professor Deborah Lipstadt and Penguin books over her description of him as a "holocaust denier".

In a letter to the *Times* which was never published, Lady Renouf described Irving as "intellectually upfront, socially refined and not an anti-semite". Rather he is "an Old Testament race seperatist [sic.] (like his legal detractors), but then departs from them because of his N.T-revised moral aversion to political, economic and theological race-supremacy". The Reform Club duly decided to "name" Irving, barring him from the premises. Perhaps this time they should bar her.

'Backbiter'


SO OUR MISSION STATEMENT IS TO ACHIEVE A GOLDEN FLEECE?
LET'S TOUCH BASE
WE WANT A POSITIVE OUTCOME SITUATION JASON
ARGO
RGJ

"Oh, no! Jargonauts!"



LORD Archer's solicitors at Mishcon de Reya have come up with a most ingenious ruse to try to prevent the *Daily Star* claiming £2m from the perjuring peer, in recompense for the libel damages and costs it paid him 15 years ago.

The *Star*'s action against Archer is due to begin in October. In mid-June, however, he will apply for the case to be cancelled on the grounds that it is "out of time".

How so? The argument goes like this. In 1989 the journalist Adam Raphael, who had testified against Archer at the libel trial, published his book *My Learned Friends*, which hinted heavily that the master story-teller had lied in court. Thus, according to Mishcon de Reya, anyone reading the book could have guessed that Archer was a perjurer – and the *Star* should have demanded its money back forthwith, instead of waiting for another 13 years.

Even more audaciously, Archer's lawyers have written to Adam Raphael asking for help – apparently forgetting that at the original trial they tried to wreck Raphael's reputation by suggesting that he, rather than Archer, was the dishonest witness. When the surprised hack rang Mishcon to point out that he always thought Archer was lying, he was even more surprised by the reply: Yes, exactly, that's just why Jeffrey wants you as a witness.

Traditionally, the definition of chutzpah is the man who murders his parents and then pleads for clemency from the court because he's an orphan. But Archer's brilliant wheeze runs it a close second: he needn't repay money he obtained under false pretences, because the victims ought to have realised he was a crook all along!

MEDIA complaints that the Bloody Sunday inquiry bill is approaching £126m fall short of the mark. The figure excludes the ministry of defence's (already enormous) costs, so Lord Saville of Newdigate is well on target to pass the £200m mark by the time he produces his report (which will immediately be rubbished by all sides and prompt a flurry of applications for judicial review).

Costs could be reduced, however, if the inquiry sat for five days a week and took fewer holidays. Having enjoyed a Christmas break from 3pm on Thursday 13 December until 10am on Monday 21 January (like everyone else), the tribunal managed to clock up one full four-day working week followed by two days of hearings before adjourning to mark the anniversary of the shootings.

Since then the pace has further slowed due to witnesses pulling out pending appeal court judgments. And after the Easter break, the inquiry's "Summer Term 2002: revised schedule of sittings" is as follows: 24-25 April, 29 April-2 May, 7-9 May, 14-16 May, 20-23 May and 27-30 May.

The spring bank holiday recess then follows until hearings recommence between 10-13 June and 17-20 June. Then it's the summer hols – from 4pm on 20 June until 10am on 2 September, when two days "are earmarked for interlocutory hearings".

ULSTER first minister David Trimble's recent libel victory over Amazon, the internet book-seller, was accompanied by the usual reminder from the company that it can't police comments written on its website.

The libel payout, the latest development in the continuing saga surrounding *The Committee* by author and film maker Sean McPhilemy (see *Eyes passim ad nauseam*), will add to the Trimble family's bank balance, already bolstered by Mr Trimble's share of the Nobel peace prize money. This might come in handy if he ever needs to buy a new house in England (after the next Northern Ireland assembly elections, for example).

Although Amazon insisted the damages be kept confidential, they are likely to be substantial given that Trimble had twice been falsely linked to serial killings in Ulster, including the murder of famous solicitor Pat Finucane. That suggestion, now withdrawn by the enigmatic McPhilemy, has never been given any credence by the continuing investigation under the Met's panicky commissioner Sir John Stevens.

The Northern Territory parliamentary speaker will ask police on Friday to have a former government adviser who had sex in her chair charged with illegal entry.

Yahoo! Australian news summary

CHESS NEWS

THERE has been an unusual reaction from lawyers representing Brain Games Network (BGN) to our article in the last *Eye* about the company's financial shenanigans: deafening silence. Previously Messrs Sue, Grabbit & Runne (aka Atlantic Law) could be relied upon to threaten writs or injunctions against anyone who dared to publish such scurrilous details.

Some *Eye* readers have expressed puzzlement at how the dealings at BGN have escaped the attention of the company's shareholders. This final part of the Penguin Business Masterclass, the course that commenced in *Eye* 1050, is therefore devoted to cover-up and escape techniques, the relevant details of which can be gleaned from BGN's notices of an annual general meeting (agm) and extraordinary general meeting (egm) that took place at Atlantic Law's offices on 18 December last year.

The former Tory MP Sir Jeremy Hanley, BGN's chairman, provided a report to shareholders stating that the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2000 recorded a loss of £3,200,000, which "represented the investment in the World Chess Championship and the building of the Braingames Network brand". No mention here that about £650,000 of this represented contributions to the personal business interests of two prominent BGN figures, entrepreneur Alan Lubin and chess impresario Raymond "the Penguin" Keene.

Nevertheless, the company could reasonably have expected to face the wrath of its shareholders, forewarned by the whistle-blowing of former chief executive Suzanne Martin. But BGN neatly ensured that some of the more eyebrow-raising transactions were presented as deals that benefited the company and, furthermore, had been "carefully considered by your Board who, with appropriate legal advice (with the relevant Directors not voting), have determined that they are each in the interests of the Company."

The web site scam and the Havendisc share scam, both described in *Eye* 1050, were covered in the notice of EGM by this blanket of whitewash but none of the facts published in *Eye* 1050 was divulged to investors, who therefore knew nothing about the worthless nature of Havendisc and the huge profit made by Lubin's company Giloberg on the website deal. The lesson here is that it is always easier to get your shareholders to vote in favour of a resolution at an EGM or AGM if they are kept ignorant of any facts that might persuade them to vote the opposite way.

It is also intriguing that while the EGM was asked to "ratify" the Havendisc share scam that took place some 21 months earlier and involved a mere 4 million BGN shares, no resolution was put to the meeting relating to the 18 million shares that had chan ged hands in yet another scam, in return for the two worthless companies Praetor Ltd and Brain Games Ltd (see *Eye*s 1044 and 1050).

How could Lubin and Keene be certain that their "ratification" and other proposals would be passed by the EGM? The lesson here illustrates the use of a couple of carrots and a stick. One of the carrots was the prospect of a merger, by means of a share-swap deal, with Einstein Group plc – an attractive proposition given that BGN was virtually out of funds at the time and had some pressing liabilities but no viable business plan.

However, the original investors in BGN had paid £3m for what was, by the time of the EGM and AGM, only 10.4 percent of the equity in the company: they were being asked to vote in favour of a resolution valuing their £3m investment at something in the region of £90,000. So a second carrot was dangled before them – free shares in a new company, Brain Games Asia Inc (BGA), incorporated in the British Virgin Islands and therefore immune from the normal scrutiny and regulations pertaining to UK companies.

The *raison d'être* for BGA was that it would acquire the "Asian interests" of BGN, namely BGN's rights to an annual Xiang-Qi (Chinese Chess) tournament and the benefits of an "event agreement" between BGN and the Beijing-based chess organisation China Q-Yuan. (In fact this agreement covers the "World Xiang-Qi Challenge", but why not make one deal look like two? It creates a better impression for shareholders.) No explanation was given in the notices as to how these rights and agreement would create revenue for BGA, but it all sounded impressive.

The stick used to support these carrots was a classic method of winning a vote on any resolution. The notice of AGM and EGM contains, in bold, a sentence that highlights the futility of objection: "The Directors have been advised that shareholders holding more than 75% of the Ordinary Shares have agreed in principle to agree irrevocably to vote in favour of all resolutions required to implement the merger." In other words, it doesn't matter how you guys vote, we have more than enough votes committed to carry everything we want. This coup illustrates the importance of planning your company's share allocation well in advance. By grabbing 88 percent for themselves initially (see *Eye* 1050), Keene, Lubin and their assignees were always assured of absolute control.

So the AGM and EGM were mere formalities, with Lubin holding sufficient proxies to pass every resolution. Thanks to a further dilution in the shares, if BGN's original investors are lucky they will now get back a little over 1 percent of their money – plus, of course, the huge benefits that will doubtless accrue from their ownership of equity in an offshore company over which they have absolutely no influence or control.

FIVE TV

Stars And Their Doubles (ITV1)

THERE are now so many series featuring look-alikes on ITV1 that you begin to wonder if the schedules contain a hidden confession. Perhaps the guy calling himself "David Liddiment" who's currently running Network Centre is actually a bus-driver from Burnley who saw an ad in Broadcast and bought himself a pair of designer specs. The real Liddiment is bound and gagged in a cupboard somewhere.

Certainly this theory of a replica chief executive might explain why there's so much crap on the channel at the moment. Despite the fact that *Survivor* was a disaster last year, it's re-appeared as *Survivor 2*. Even one of the most powerful formats on British TV, *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?*, has been so over-used that last week it was reduced to a variation in which all the contestants were sets of twins.

Stars And Their Doubles left you fearing that — after the celebrity editions of *Millionaire?* — the celebrity doppelganger version can't be far away. This was in two senses a lookalike show: both in the sense that the participants were alleged to resemble celebrities and because it was a shameless attempt to do *Stars In Their Eyes* again under another name.

But at least that show requires some kind of talent: if you want to "do" Celine Dion, you need to be able to approximate a melody. This show hands out prizes simply for having a coincidental phizog. A 75-minute peak-time show had no bigger idea than handing out prizes for double-takes and momentary ones at that. An increasing number of ITV1 shows are sponsored and, though this one currently lacks a backer, they should probably be ringing round opticians. The truth is that anyone who really enjoyed this show should have their driver's licence taken away immediately.

A chap called Frank — billed as a "professional Hannibal Lecter lookalike" — was passable if you closed one eye and squinted with the other but hopeless when he opened his mouth. In the sports section, someone won because they looked like Michael Schumacher but once you put a red baseball cap and a driver's fire-suit on almost anyone they could pass for any racing driver you mentioned.

"I'll have that, thank you"

Desperate in theory, the show was even worse in execution. The contestants had been given terrible sub-*Blind Date* puns to read out: "Pamela Anderson and I have many similarities but two in particular stick out!" The not-very-good presenter was Des O'Connor, whereas the really smart move would have been to have the whole thing linked by a not very good Des-resembler.

It's almost certain that the original format envisaged actual celebrities presenting awards to their doubles. But no real things had actually been booked so the "real stars" participating were types like Keith Chegwin and Cruise-crooner Jane McDonald who are increasingly able to walk down a street without even being mistaken for themselves.

And it was never disclosed how the voting was done, which made it somehat suspicious that the overall prize-winner was a bloke who was supposed to look like Curly from *Coronation Street*, produced by Granada TV, also makers of *Stars And Their Doubles*.

Hidden within this witless format was an interesting subject. The business of look-alikes truly reveals the extent of the celebrity sickness in our culture. It's perhaps depressing enough that an actor who appears in soap operas could be chased down the street by crazed admirers, but the incident becomes an iconic horror when, in fact, they're running after someone who's just an ordinary television viewer like them but who might pass for famous at a thousand metres in the very last light of dusk.

Questions which would have been raised in a documentary or panel show – is it an offence to give an autograph as someone else?, have any of the lookalikes ever cashed in their physical coincidence for sexual favours? – had to be ignored because the show was constructed to treat accidental resemblance with reverence.

But such tough discussion of the subject would probably be too risky for the "David Liddiment" pulling down a salary he could never have dreamed of on the buses as supremo of ITV1. People might get suspicious and, knocking on the cupboards, discover the real one: the innovative programme-maker who liked to make speeches about public service broadcasting.

'Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

BBC director-general Greg Dyke's "Making It Happen" campaign to "cut away unnecessary procedure, rules and regulation" has got off to a flying start.

Flying to the US, that is, for a six-day fact-finding tour for 15 "theme leaders headed by Greg". They visited eight different companies, but, alas, "none of them offers an exact template for us", reveals the junket leader Susan Spindler after nearly a week of "trying our hands at robot surgery" and sitting in on "a briefing for kitchen staff".

Elsewhere BBC York's smoking room has received a coat of paint… daffodils have been planted at Woodlands… BH has got some new cycle racks… and there's now a "plasma screen in the Yalding House reception". Brilliant!

Despite the rush to "cut the crap", though, the BBC is still spending £4m to send new staff on a four-day residential course in which "new joiners will go on a 'journey' through the organisations past, present and future" while discovering "what we're about" and enjoying "a launch pad for friendships".

For the 5,000 new staff who have joined the BBC this year alone, many on three-month contracts will probably discover that "what we're about" is not renewing those contracts.

DUMB BRITAIN

The Weakest Link, BBC2

Anne Robinson: In Scotland, which river flows past Balmoral Castle?

Contestant: The Thames.

AR: In maths, what is one half as a decimal?

Contestant: A quarter.

This Morning, ITV

John Leslie: On which river is Newcastle situated?

Contestant: The Thames.

JL: Yes! Well done!

DUMB AUSTRALIA

The 2BL 702 Quiz

Host: Which mathematician said: "The most incomprehensible thing about this universe is that it's comprehensible?"

Caller: Mel Gibson.

Answers: 1 Dee. 2 0.5. 3 Tyne. 4 Einstein.

MORE evidence emerges of the effects of the cutbacks forced on ITN's "news" operation thanks to its ridiculously low bid to retain its contract as ITV's news provider.

The sight of harassed sports hack Graham Miller trying to cover the Salt Lake City winter olympics from a tiny edit suite on Gray's Inn Road was almost as depressing as the now regular attempts by *News at Ten* to cover world events with no live elements.

WHERE THE SILLIEST MEMBERS OF SOCIETY...
When LOUIS met...
BBC
WHO THE PUBLIC HAVE COME TO REGARD AS A BIT OF A JOKE...
GET THEIR OWN SERIES
When Louis met...
LOUIS
Ken Pyne

ACCORDING to a survey by the Independent Television Commission: "Viewers favour knowledge over youth in television presenters." The research shows that the fashion for shallow yoof-style broadcasting is at an end, particularly for the largest group of viewers – older people.

Nevertheless, at the BBC the Talent campaign is attracting exactly the sort of young, ignorant, in-yer-face presenters this audience dislikes the most – at a cost to licence-payers of £6m.

Still, the BBC clearly has trouble identifying talent. It paid £4m for Ian Wright, whose febrile chat show was recently carpet-bombed in the ratings by the film *633 Squadron.* And it paid £5m for Johnny Vaughan, whose chat show is haemorrhaging viewers by the week. At the last count it had just 1.4 million… and falling.

"We all hate it"

Plugged In

Who was the first person you spoke to this morning?
My publicist about a photo shoot with *OK!* magazine.

— Interview with actress Samantha Robson, Sunday Express *(prop: Richard Desmond, owner of* OK! *magazine).*

Which magazine is currently on your bedside table?
OK! I always like to see what my contemporaries are up to.

— Interview with Carol Smillie, Sunday Express *(prop: R. Desmond, etc, etc).*

Nominated by Ray Miller.

An occasional column devoted to cross-media plugs masquerading as news.

BIRTSPEAK

Dear Everyone

Over the past few months we have been developing a different structure for the adult learning group. With some re-alignment and drawing together of posts the structure will now change with the creation of pan-BBC delivery teams, supported by a small outward-facing enabling centre. This central team will be the axis by which all activities are prioritised to maintain our strategic focus, to manage key partnership projects, and to have an effective support and communication service for the devolved teams.

Each team will "own" the vision for learning within their sphere of activity, and will be responsible for putting in place the strategy, the partnerships, and the integrated working relationships to deliver major learning projects from the BBC.

You will recognise the departments on the attached, which are now collectively known, as Learning with the BBC.

PAUL GERHARDT

— Internal BBC email.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"He has suffered from debilitating brain disease for years. Do we know what stage it had progressed to?"

— BBC Radio Five Live anchorwoman quizzing correspondent on the death of Dudley Moore.

AD NAUSEAM

SHY, retiring Naked Chef Jamie Oliver is back in the spotlight. Few could be unaware that the pug-faced cook has just become a father for the first time. So how kind of Channel 4 to celebrate the happy day by gifting him £1m for the rights to his next series, *Oliver's Army,* in which it is rumoured he may do some cooking.

But the shift from the BBC also becomes decidedly intriguing in the light of the latest report from the Independent Television Commission (ITC), which regulates all UK TV advertising. Whereas ads that are plainly misleading or grossly offensive are commonly chastised in public, there are several lesser-known ITC rules that advertisers can break. One recent rap went to digital channel UK Food, for not ensuring enough of what the ITC call "artist separation".

The rules stipulate that "advertisements featuring an artist must not be scheduled in breaks in or adjacent to a programme in which they also appear." Else dumb Britain might think that the television star and the celebrity endorser were one and the same, and the TV programme would become a half-hour ad break. The important thing is that this particular complaint came during an episode of none other than *The Naked Chef,* which happened to coincide with a Sainsbury's ad. The complaint was upheld.

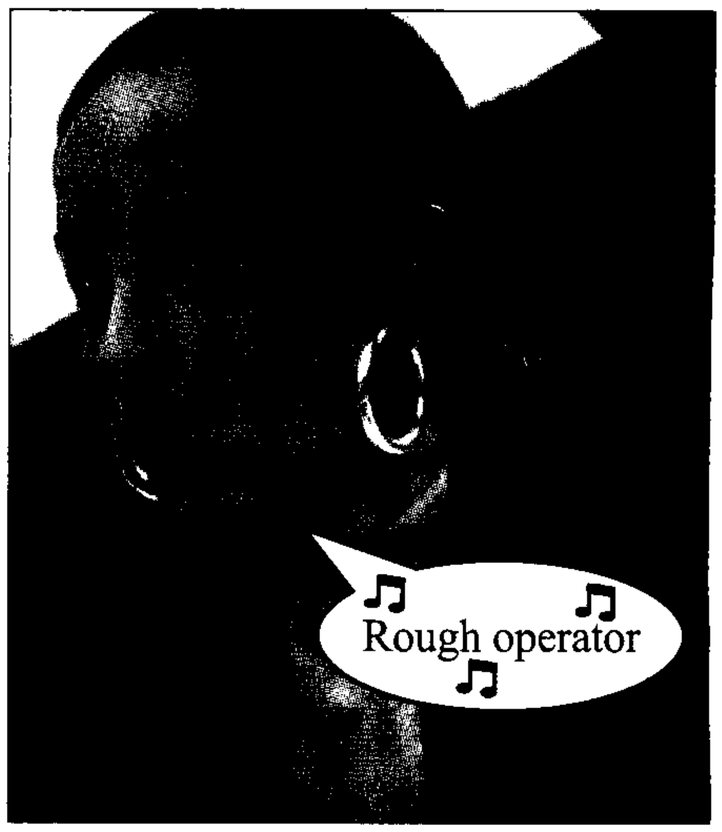
Oliver ended-up at Channel 4 precisely because the BBC had got fed up with Sainsbury's trading off his TV image. But in the light of the ITC's artist separation rules, it looks like his C4 contract and his beloved adverts might clash head-on – if the demographic for Oliver is good enough for a prime time slot, then surely Sainsbury's (which rides on his shoulders and has just signed a new two-year contract for £2m), would want to advertise there? Alas, it can't – so anyone chancing upon an unfortunate breach of the artist separation rules when Oliver's new show appears should contact the ITC immediately.

STAGECOACH didn't have a leg to stand on when the advertising standards authority (ASA) bollocked it for exaggerating the number of new trains it had ordered for its South West Trains franchise.

An SWT leaflet had trumpeted 785 new "trains", implying more than 3,000 carriages. The real figure was 785 new carriages. SWT's defence was that it could say what it liked in its leaflets because they were "public relations material" and not covered by the advertising codes of practice.

SPLIT personalities

Bob Moore



Marquis de Sade

WORLD OF HYPE

THE decision of Consignia's new chairman Alan Leighton to change the £2m Consignia brand name created by the Dragon agency back to the Post Office after just a year is bad news in the design world.

A roster of agencies, including Ogilvy & Mather and the Conran Design Group, were signed up to provide £30m worth of literature, internal communications, information design and new media consultancy to the Consignia brand over the next five years. But not any more, it seems.

Number crunching

£35,000,000
BBC4's launch budget

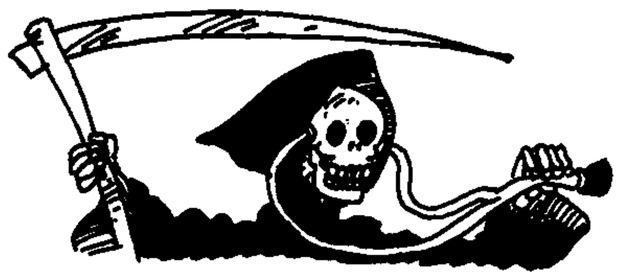
11,000
BBC4's launch audience

£3,181
Cost to licence-payer of each viewer

SUPERMODELS

KERBER

KATE MOSS FINDS OUT SHE'S PREGNANT:
SORRY DOCTOR… I WAS JUST SO SHOCKED WHEN YOU TOLD ME!!!
Shake!
WHEN I SAID 'BUN IN THE OVEN' I DIDN'T ACTUALLY MEAN YOU HAD ANY FOOD IN THERE!
PHEW… THANK GOD IT'S JUST A BABY!!!



DOING THE ROUNDS

Whose fault is it anyway?

LAST YEAR researchers examining medical records in two London hospitals found that 11 percent of inpatients experience what is touchingly known as an "adverse event". That's either bad luck or a cock-up. Rolled out across the NHS, that's 70,000 deaths a year and almost a million injuries in hospitals alone.

No one's got much of a clue of the state of play in general practice, but suffice to say that an awful lot of people are killed or injured as a result of coming into contact with the NHS.

This isn't a peculiarly British problem – health systems around the world are waking up to the downside of medical science – but we're extremely bad at acknowledging it. The culture of "burn the notes, bury the X-rays" and hope the patient dies before he gets to court is still prevalent. "New" Labour has set up a national patient safety agency to encourage reporting, and hence learning from, these adverse events and claims to want to encourage "an open and non-punitive environment". So why did health secretary Alan Milburn ignore the Bristol inquiry's recommendation of no-fault compensation?

As a lawyer, inquiry chairman Ian Kennedy knew perfectly well that the threat of a clinical negligence claim is the catalyst to manning the barricades and keeping all the bad news under wraps. According to Kennedy, it should be replaced by a system "to respond promptly to patients' needs by compensating those who suffer harm arising out of treatment from the NHS". The current system of complaints and negligence claims is so tortuous, prolonged and sadistic that – as one consultant put it – "you have to be either very rich or very stupid to proceed". As a result, only a tiny fraction of the million or more harmed by the NHS each year seek redress, and of those only 5 percent get it. However, this absurdly unjust system has not stopped the NHS paying, or putting aside, £4bn a year in legal fees.

It's very expensive for patients and relatives, too, of course. Josephine Ocloo is still trying to establish the facts surrounding the death of her daughter Krista in 1996, and the care she received at the Royal Brompton hospital. "I wanted to know if anything untoward had happened that should not have. It was very obvious to me early on that she had not been cared for properly and it was a great insult to me that they were not prepared to admit this and to simply tell the truth. If there was negligence, I wanted an open admission and to be offered some form of redress as recognition of the injury. To me this would have constituted accountability, which is vital. It would have shown my daughter counted for something and could not be injured without someone being held to account. I could then come to terms with her death and move on. This would have stopped me from taking legal action."

Of course none of this happened, and after three inquiries she brought legal action which last year found that "the hospital negligently lost one or more opportunities to review Krista's condition", and this denied Josephine vital information about Krista's risk of sudden death. However, many crucial bits of her medical records have been lost and the judge was unable to conclude that the lack of follow-up and communication were the cause of Krista's death. This is not unusual – causation is near impossible to prove – but as a result Josephine had costs awarded against her and is now facing financial ruin. "I won a ruling of negligence but lost my case."

Jean Brett has been trying to get justice and accountability from the NHS since 1985, when she was diagnosed as having glaucoma. She subsequently underwent an operation on her right eye at Watford General Hospital. The eye haemorrhaged, and still has a pronounced droop and continues to cause pain. In 1992, she was told an operation would also be required on her left eye. Mrs Brett insisted on a second opinion. At Moorfields Eye Hospital in London, she learnt that not only was the operation unnecessary but she had never had glaucoma.

She too had devoted much of her time and more than £30,000 of her money to getting an explanation, apology and assurance that the work of her consultant, a Mr Pearce, has been reviewed to ensure the same mistake has not happened to other patients. As a 17-year case history in the failings of the NHS complaints procedure, it would take some beating. Indeed, Watford General Hospital has repeatedly encouraged Mrs Brett to take legal action, doubtless hoping she will go broke and give up.

In 1999 an independent conciliator instructed the trust to offer Mrs Brett a solution "that doesn't make a mockery of her situation". Three years later, it still hasn't. The case continues…

Any contributions to either of these campaigns will be forwarded via M.D.

M.D.

DOWN ON THE FARM

THE gulf between the real world of livestock farming and the trendy, sanitised arena of cool Britannia and its EU masters continues to grow.

The spreading of manures and the disposal of dead animals are farming realities, but have no place in the shiny 21st century. The first is to be turned into a bureaucratic nightmare, while dead animals will shortly be legislated out of existence.

"Fallen stock" have traditionally been buried on farms or eaten by hounds – or indeed people in less fastidious ages. Following its success in creating the largest mass graves ever, the government is to follow EU legislation and outlaw all burial. This leaves the only cheap option to be, er, hunt kennels, which collected 366,000 carcasses in 2000, thereby using what would otherwise be a disposal problem. If they go the only legal course will be to pay for a truck to come grinding through the lanes, to collect every dead lamb and calf for haulage to a distant gas-fired cremation – another environmental triumph.

This is an expensive waste of energy, and not only because burial and feeding to hounds are perfectly satisfactory. In remoter areas many farmers have used "exposure burial" – putting small bodies out as a present for foxes and buzzards. For large carcasses, including cows, burial in muck works well – after a year there is nothing left but the bones. (This composting has now been reinvented by researchers, but inevitably, involving the expensive installation of a large, underground, sealed concrete pit.)

All of which may well continue for sheep, but the 600 staff of the British Cattle Movement Services, obsessively tracking the movements of every one of our 11m bovines, will doubtless be used to hunt down any farmer who thinks he can pop one more calf in the ground.

As for muck and slurry, the announcement of a "nitrate vulnerable zone" to cover most, if not all, of Britain has shocked an already traumatised industry. There is, as ever, a new and awesome administrative burden, and although some of the rules are no more than good practice, others are unduly restrictive and bear no relation to the realities of farming. Finding suitable windows of land-use, time, and weather to spread muck is always a challenge and may now be impossible on some soil types.

What we really need is a two-government system: one to posture and pout and a second one to govern that part of the nation whose hands sometimes get dirty.

'Gumboot'

"I wonder if you could help? We're looking to buy a bag of crisps…"

SIGNAL FAILURES

TRANSPORT secretary Stephen Byers' U-turn on compensating Railtrack shareholders shows how Labour's public-private partnerships (PPPs) are not based on a principle of partnership with the private sector, but on the principle of "heads the private sector wins, tails the taxpayer loses".

By giving £300m of taxpayers' money to shareholders, Byers is demonstrating yet again that private firms can invest in the public sector without risk. If it all goes pear-shaped, taxpayers pick up the tab. If it all goes right, bankers or firms can squeeze extra profits from the scheme in return for wholly imaginary "risk".

The Railtrack decision is reminiscent of the way the government bailed out the Channel tunnel rail link builder London & Continental. And someone who has been involved in both decisions is Adrian Montague, deputy chairman of Network Rail, Railtrack's replacement.

Montague clearly understands the principles well. He was closely involved in negotiating the Chunnel link bail-out after the consortium behind it was unable to raise enough private money, not least because its passenger predictions were Dome-like in their hopeless optimism.

When the consortium begged the government for more millions, Montague and chums dreamed up a scheme in which the taxpayer would underwrite the consortium's bonds. Thus, when the absurdly high estimate of passengers fails to materialise, the government will be liable for £4bn worth of London & Continental Railways' bonds.

As MPs in the public accounts committee have observed, the Chunnel link deal is "fatally flawed" and private investors should have been given "something to lose if the project fails". Instead, says the committee, they are "insulated from risk".

With the Railtrack deal, Montague has again been involved in a solution based on guaranteed cash for failure. His love of bailing out bankers may of course be due to the fact he is a proven banker himself, working part time for the giant French bank Société Générale when he is not working for the government.

After the Chunnel link fiasco, MPs said: "It is a false economy to proceed with a PPP in which too little risk capital has been subscribed by the private sector." But can we expect fairer PPPs where bail-outs for the private sector aren't guaranteed? Not necessarily. Adrian Montague is also deputy chair of Partnerships UK… the government's lead adviser on PFI and PPP schemes!

● PASSENGERS foolish enough to part with the £45 first-class fare from Penrith to Manchester on Virgin Trains on Sundays are being taken for a ride – on a bus.

For the past two months there has been no train out of Penrith on Sundays because of the ubiquitous "engineering works". Passengers are taken to Preston on a crowded bus, where they transfer to a single-class commuter train. But that has not stopped Virgin selling first-class tickets to the unwary.

Virgin's press office said that any passenger who had paid first class fare for this third class service would be eligible for a refund "…and anyway, it would have been a *luxury* coach."

So that's all right, then.

'Dr B. Ching'

ROTTEN BOROUGHS

WINTER WARMER

DONCASTER'S Labour leader and anointed mayoral candidate Martin Winter is not a happy chappie. He says he has taken legal advice over a "smear campaign" against his march on the mayoralty. The mud-slinging concerns the Glass Park (*Eye* 1049), a multi-million pound "community" project that is dear to his heart, if no one else's.

Friends of Cllr Winter are worried the stress of high office is having an effect of his memory. In correspondence in November last year the *Eye* asked him if he had acted as a paid consultant on various schemes, including the Glass Park, and he replied: "I am saying this is certainly not the case." Funny then, that accounts presented to the charity commission show that in 1999-2000, Cllr Winter was paid £10,000 by the Glass Park's trustees for work on the project.

He declares: "I have nothing to hide with this project." We shall have to take his word for it, because since *Eye* 1049 appeared all internet sites carrying information about the various Glass Park subsidiaries have mysteriously closed and the trust's agm, originally scheduled for 14 March, has been postponed until after the mayoral election.

● **MEANWHILE hapless [*shurely "hopeless"? Ed.*] local government minister Nick Raynsford has got himself into another entertaining tangle as he valiantly flogs the limping elected mayoral horse. He is contemplating forcing Birmingham city council to hold a binding referendum on the subject, despite the result of a substantial poll of residents in which the winning option, voted for by 46.4 percent, was to keep the existing cabinet system. Yes, says tricky Nicky, but 53.6 percent wanted another option — either a mayor or a mayor-manager combination! Given his logic, perhaps the government should rerun the 2001 general election — the one in which Labour won 40.7 percent of the vote but 59.3 percent preferred "another option".**

HOME TO ROOST

COUNCILS moan about the "burden" placed on them by asylum-seekers. But many may only be reaping what they have sown.

A report from Campaign Against Arms Trade details the investments of public bodies, including dozens of UK local authorities, in worldwide arms dealing. Ironically, many of the councils with the biggest share portfolios in arms companies are playing host to thousands of asylum-seekers.

The logic is straightforward. Arms companies profit from conflicts. Conflicts create refugees. Refugees become asylum-seekers. Asylum-seekers become a "burden" on local councils.

Glasgow city council profits from conflict by holding 1,296,931 shares in BAe Systems and 390,000 in Rolls-Royce. It sees its 5,270 asylum-seekers as less of an asset. Bradford city council has 4.7 million BAe Systems shares, 1.7 million GKN and 1,820 asylum-seekers. Wolverhampton: 5.1 million BAe, 1.6 million Rolls-Royce, 1.2 million GKN, 1,270 asylum seekers. And so on across the country. As they say: what goes around, comes around.

PAPER CHASE

FLINTSHIRE council chief executive Phillip McGreevy and legal director Andrew Loveridge have been put on the spot over their suppression of documents detailing a series of suspect deals reported in the *Eye*.

An employment tribunal in Shrewsbury has been hearing the constructive dismissal claim of Andy Sutton, the council's former internal auditor, who was sacked for trying to do his job: he had asked to see the paperwork in cases where allegations of fraud and forgery had been made. McGreedy claimed the documents in question had been "lost", while Loveridge refused to answer any questions at all on the most sensitive case, that of council officer Siân Griffiths, who was mysteriously paid £48,000 in overtime in two years while in charge of producing council documents for the Waterhouse inquiry into child abuse in North Wales (*Eye* 1048).

The three weeks set aside for the hearing having proved insufficient, the tribunal has adjourned until 20 May, when council leader Alex "dodgy boiler" Aldridge (*Eye* 1042) is due to give his doubtless illuminating version of events.

● **COUNCILLORS in run-down Hastings are preening themselves at news that the town is to receive £400m in regeneration dosh from the EU, leading to fanciful talk of the drugs, unemployment and single-parenting capital of the south coast being transformed into "Britain's Barcelona". The idea of Hastings metamorphosing into some sort of cultural capital has provoked hollow laughter from musicians in the area, who are dismayed at East Sussex county council's arbitrary decision to save a petty £45,000 by closing the county's three music libraries, thereby depriving choirs, orchestras, brass bands, students and schoolchildren of ready free access to thousands of pieces of sheet music and scores. And what is the county council doing with the space freed up in its libraries? Installing more computers, of course!**

PALMEIRA DAYS

COUNCIL taxpayers in Brighton & Hove hope that a scrutiny committee inquiry into one of the council's most embarrassing debacles will result in an illuminating report rather than a whitewash.

In 2000 the "new" Labour council ignobly tried to save a few quid by trying to close down Palmeira House, a small home providing round-the-clock care for autistic children, just two years after setting it up with some fanfare in partnership with the charity NCH Action for Children. Distressed and angry parents took the case to the high court, where an outraged judge ordered the council to keep the home open for as long as any of the existing pupils needed care.

Since the judgment it has been all change at the top at B&H, with council leader Lynette Gwyn-Jones and chief executive Glyn Jones standing down and solicitor Claer Lloyd-Jones taking herself off to Hackney. (At least in Brighton one doesn't have to try so hard to keep up with the Joneses these days.)

Cllr Jean Spray has stepped down from responsibility for social care and, last but not least, director of social care Allan Bowman has "resigned" with a pay-off in the region of £400,000 — a sum which might have provided a useful amount of care for autistic youngsters. The fear is that with all those concerned effectively out of the firing line, the temptation to "draw a line" under the affair may prove irresistible.

● **THOUGHT FOR THE DAY: "Doncaster is a town that is on the up, there is definitely a feeling about that." — Kevin Hughes, MP for Doncaster North.**

EDUCASHUN NEWZ

AN attractive opportunity to invest in a new chain of day nurseries under the tax friendly enterprise investment scheme (EIS) was heralded last month in national newspapers including the *Sunday Telegraph* and the *Financial Times*.

Childcare Corporation 5 is, as the name suggests, the fifth such project of its kind. The previous four Childcare Corporation companies have raised more than £12.5m and currently operate seven nurseries with the construction of a further three to start shortly. The latest scheme invites subscriptions for investment in ten new day nurseries in the Midlands and Southern England which will each cater full time for around 100 children aged between three months and five years.

The new purpose-built nurseries, which will trade under the name "Kiddi Caru", will charge around £130 per child per week. Childcare Corporation 5 is sponsored by stockbrokers Teather & Greenwood, and T&G director Martin Sherwood is also a non-executive director of the new firm. So far so good… but prospective investors should read the small print.

The accountants report for Childcare Corporation 5 prepared by Baker Tilly on 28 February 2002 reveals that on 20 December 2001 the securities and futures authority (FSA) gave notice that disciplinary proceedings had been brought against Teather & Greenwood and Martin Sherwood over the failure to disclose material information to investors. Teather & Greenwood was fined £150,000 plus £15,000 costs; and Sherwood was ordered to pay £15,000 plus £5,000 costs for neglecting to disclose in a fundraising document for internet company Powernet Telecom that its chief executive Ian Carey was disqualified as a director.

The facts came to light when Powernet collapsed owing £30m. It is interesting, therefore, that in its prospectus Childcare Corporation 5 announces its intention of running nurseries it acquires as trading businesses under the name "Carey Days". The firm has also yet to appoint a financial director, stating in its prospectus that a candidate will be selected only after the offer to buy shares in Childcare Corporation 5 has closed.

IT'S GRIM UP NORTH LONDON

KNIFE & PACKER

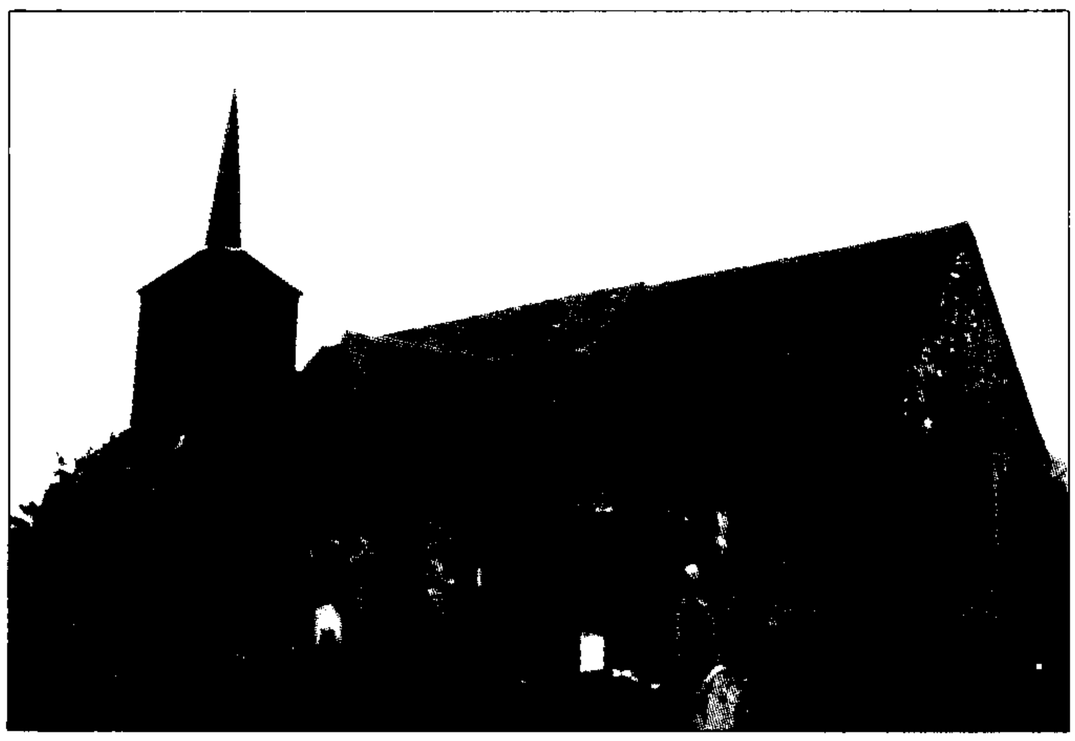
CHEERS FOR HOUSE-SITTING, MAX. ANY PROBLEMS?
WELL I HAD TO GET A PLUMBER IN TO FIX THAT PERSISTENT LEAK IN THE SITTING ROOM
THAT WASN'T A LEAK THAT WAS A WATER FEATURE!
JEZ, CALL FOR PARAMEDICS! THE KOI CARP ARE DYING!!!

NOOKS and CORNERS

THE church of St Laurence at Eastwood in Essex has been quietly minding its own business for more than 900 years, while the site on which it stands is much older: it replaced a timber Anglo-Saxon church which was itself built on an ancient pagan sacred site.

The present structure was first built in about the year 1100, has a 13th chancel and a 15th century timber roof over the Norman nave, and is now, with its weatherboarded tower and spire and its ancient walls, a charming patchwork of rubble stone, flint, Roman brick and render, a typical and lovable English village church, set in its churchyard full of ancient burials and interesting headstones. And, for what it is worth, St Laurence's has recently been listed at grade I.

But what is a thousand ages in the sight of the



chairman of the Southend Airport Company and the leader of Southend borough council? Now, after being thoughtlessly sited nine centuries ago, this innocent church finds itself in the way of a runway. It must therefore be moved or demolished — along with six cottages.

The Southend Airport Company claims that, to comply with new civil aviation authority (CAA) regulations, a safety area or cleared zone of 240 metres must be created at the end of each runway and threatens that, if this is not carried out, the airport's licence will be revoked, thus jeopardising 1,500 jobs.

Southend Airport is not yet even a century old. It began as Rochford Aerodrome and only began to have serious aspirations to being a commercial airport after the Second World War. Since then it has been growing like a cancer. Not content just to cater for local flights and short hops across the Channel, Southend Airport wants to become an international airport, handling big jets. And to this end, four cottages and a farm were eliminated a few years back. Such is progress.

But no one would now propose building an international airport from scratch on a site inland of Southend surrounded by villages and industrial estates, so why should this upstart have priority over a medieval church? It is all to satisfy the vaunting ambition of Southend borough council. But it is worth asking whether we really need yet more and bigger airports, with all the attendant pollution, noise and general inconvenience.

Since 11 September international air traffic has declined. Perhaps it will revive; perhaps not. Governments — like Southend borough council – love big prestigious airports, of course, which is why the French wish to devastate a great tract of the Somme, wiping out British and German war cemeteries (*Eye* 1043). Such is *la gloire*. But we should always remember Filton Aerodrome outside Bristol: two whole villages were wiped out so that the huge Bristol Brabazon could lumber into the air: a sacrifice made in vain.

The airport enthusiasts do at least recognise that medieval churches — in use — are not easily got rid of. There is massive local opposition to the plans, and many claim that the airport can meet the CAA's requirements without any destruction, so the proposal is not to demolish the church but merely to move it to a new site 150 yards away. Can it be done? Messrs Abbey Pynford engineers insist it is a piece of cake to put a reinforced concrete ring beam round the foundations, lift the thing up and roll it out of the way of the runway. And it will only cost some £2m or £3m. There are problems, of course: the walls might crack, and inside there are fragile wall paintings and 14th century *graffiti* — as well as burials under the floor. In fact, moving the church could well destroy its interest. And then there are all the burials in the churchyard: will they stay or be moved as well?

So which is more important: the survival of a medieval church on its hallowed site or that Essex should have another wretched international airport which, in truth, we could all do without? I know what I think.

TESS Blackstone, on behalf of the department of culture, media 'n' sport, has decided to list the Memorial Arch at Waterloo Station but not the rest of it, as English Heritage and Lambeth council requested. It is, she says, "not of special architectural interest" even though there is no other Edwardian railway station like it and the concourse is a magnificent space. Could it be that the government's commercially-minded friends in formerly-known-as Railtrack have an interest in it?

'Piloti'

I-SPY

Scottish road sign

Submitted by Gavin Dean.

£10 paid for similar submissions.

(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)

MUSIC & MUSICIANS

THE uncomfortable relationship between the Edinburgh Festival and the Festival Fringe – two entities who barely speak to each other any more, still less cooperate – became even messier last week when this summer's programme was launched.

Problems began several years ago when the Fringe – the noisy, streetwise operation that pulls in most of the tourists – made a bid for freedom and announced that its dates would no longer coincide with those of the comparatively staid Festival-proper. It would start a week earlier and, more critically, finish a week earlier, leaving the Festival to stagger on for seven days after the party was over.

Brian McMaster, the Festival's discreet, and some would say ineffectual, director, tried to brave things out and claimed that many of his audience now specifically booked for the final week because they preferred the quieter atmosphere. He also insisted the Festival would not follow the lead of the Fringe and bring its dates forward, claiming that an earlier start would bite into the summer holidays of the classical artists he'd want to book. Given that most classical artists spend their summers doing nothing but festivals, this was a curious claim. Clearly the real issue was one of principle: McMaster was making a stand.

Careful study of the 2002 programme reveals that his resolve is crumbling. Officially the Festival begins on 11 August, a week after the Fringe, and that's the date on the cover of the programme book. But read on and you find that the concerts actually start on 5 August. Asked what this means, McMaster is a touch vague. Yes, these concerts are certainly part of the Festival; but no, the Festival doesn't begin until the 11th. Er… won't that cause confusion? Not at all, says the director, enigmatically.

'Lunchtime O'Boulez'

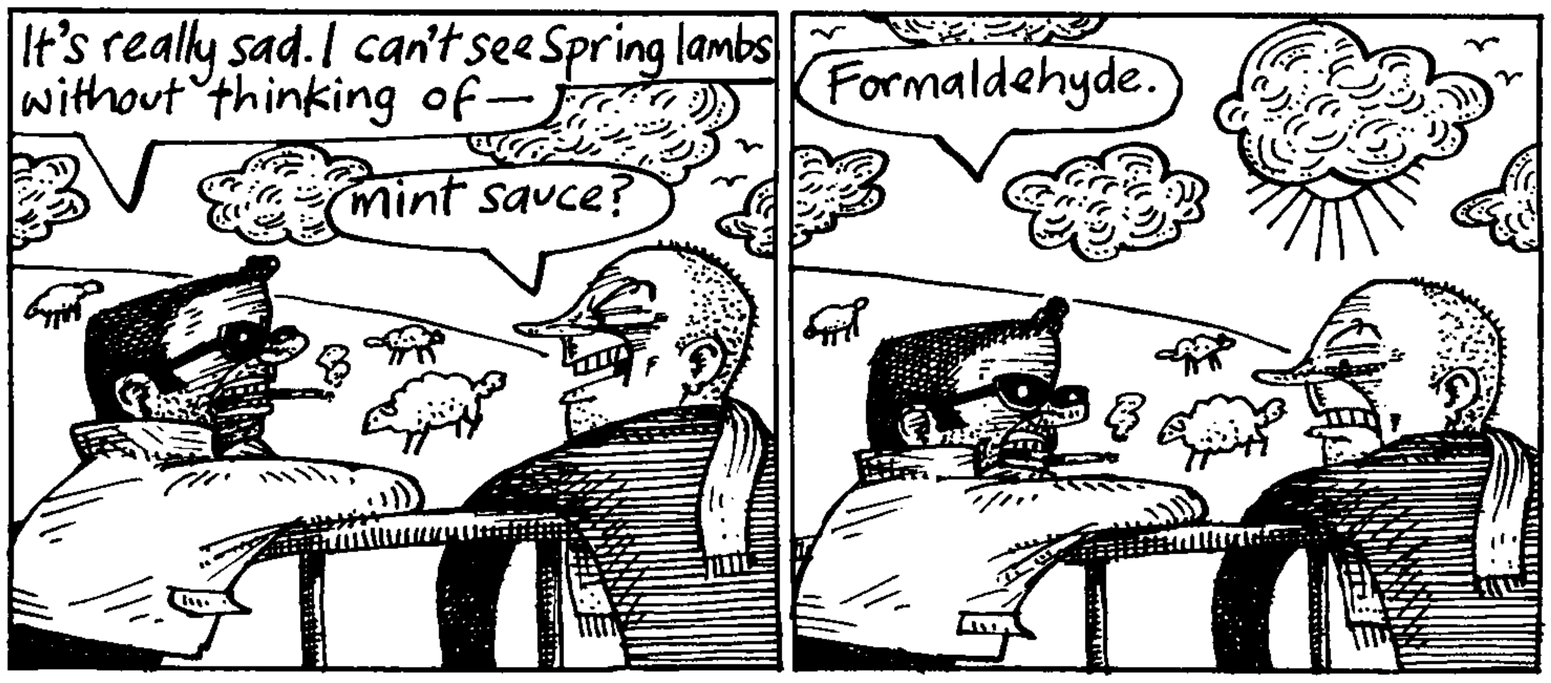
"Michael was trying to get a western saloon look with the cat flap"

Warballs

"Following the terrible events of 11 September, and the uncertainty that followed, Carlton estate agents were asked to market a substantial unmodernised Georgian house overlooking Highbury Fields, on Highbury Terrace, N5, with a guide price of £2 million. Never has the importance of 'location, location, location' been more underlined and tested in what were difficult months… A final price of £2.3 million was secured and contracts exchanged shortly thereafter."

— *Angel* magazine.

YOUNG BRITISH ARTISTS BY BIRCH



Letters

To Hull and back

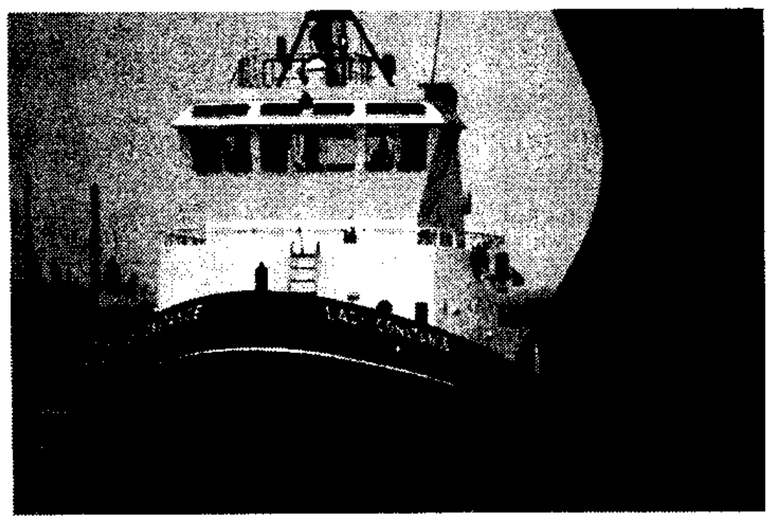
Sir,

Stan Broadwell's "Pilot error?" (Letters, 1049) was itself a catalogue of errors and untruths. Here's graphic evidence – one of around 50 photographs of the damaged bulker Bohinj ("no record exists of the Bohinj being berthed at King George V dock" wrote Mr. Broadwell) being towed into Hull's King George V dock after the potentially disastrous collision with the Immingham Oil Terminal in the background.

Much of the rest of his letter is equally refutable and lends no credence to his allegation of one-sided reporting by Private Eye – although the Humber pilots will commend the Eye's one-sided approach as the only national publication to have covered this ugly and menacing situation. As many of them have made clear, the rest of the media wants blood or oil – or both. They may yet get it but, with the rest of nation, they will also have to share the blame.

JOHN DAVIS,

Hull.



Price tagging

Sir,

Re: Electronic tagging. I refer to your article (1049) on electronic tagging of young offenders as being a cheaper alternative to prison — cheaper to whom? I refer to an article in my local paper about a young offender who, if he had been incarcerated after the third or fourth offence of his 39, would have saved an enormous amount of taxpayers' and other people's money.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP DOUËTIL,

Pirbright, Surrey.

Birth pains

Sir,

Many thanks for publishing the birth notice for my daughter Lily (1050); it was just a pity that you included it in the wrong section (Pseuds Corner).

I was especially pleased that you mentioned Antarctica and Tibet as I have spent much time and led many expeditions to both these territories, which are two of the most wonderful places on earth. On an adjacent page to Pseuds Corner, you had a piece under Literary Review, which contained the following sentence:

"Harris, though, showing a stroppiness which wins more admiration than her prose style, has suddenly put her plots and titles on hunger-strike." Surely, if you have any sense of humour and fair play, you will accept that this sentence is a piece of pompous twaddle, and therefore perfect for Pseuds Corner – and I would like to contribute it for publication in your quite excellent magazine.

The £10 would come in very handy for the next expedition.

Yours sincerely,
JULIAN FREEMAN-ATTWOOD,

Oswestry, Shropshire.

Diamond geezer?

Sir,

A couple of error corrections regarding your Giscard d'Estaing/Jean Bedel Bokassa article (Brussels Sprouts, 1050). Bokassa, whilst undeniably a buddy of d'Estaing, was not "imposed" by France as president of the Central African Republic in 1965 as you claim but rather took power from the actually installed president, David Dacko, by means of a military coup in January 1966. Dacko was returned to power in 1979 after Bokassa was induced to flee the politically insignificant and poor C.A.R. by the invading French army. After spending the 70s apologising for Bokassa, president d'Estaing was finally forced to act after the incident involving the students that you describe. However, your article does not explain that these "students" were actually school age children who were engaged in a peaceful protest when they were arrested and tortured. It's alleged that 40 of them were killed in the presence of the "Emperor" himself. Other charming allegations against Bokassa include the feeding of his political enemies to his personal collection of crocodiles. Strangely, despite Bokassa's appalling human rights record and the fact that he had brought the C.A.R. to its knees, American and British forces were nowhere to be seen when it came to removing him from power.

Yours in mock surprise,
ROBIN DOWNE,

Sheffield.

Drakes clarification

Sir,

I refer to your article headed "Drakes Drummed" which appeared in your recent edition of Private Eye (Rotten Boroughs, 1050). I think it is important that I correct some of the factual errors in this article:

I did not instruct John Wood to raise an invoice for a particular sum. I instructed him to raise it for the sum that Drakes was entitled to claim under the contract.

Frank Millerick approved the invoice relying on the calculations of John Wood. John Wood, the contract manager, did not say to Frank Millerick, as asserted in your article, that "he told Millerick he had been instructed to bill Westminster as if the vehicle had been used every day".

Westminster queried John Wood's calculations and after reviewing them agreed a fee for the use of the vehicle.

At the disciplinary hearing on 6 March, Drakes were not "all set to sack Wood" nor were they "taken aback to find that Wood was not only a member of the GMB Union, but was to be represented by a Senior Official".

Yours faithfully,
SIDNEY B. SIMCOX,

MD, Drakes Group Ltd.

Lookalike

Commander

President

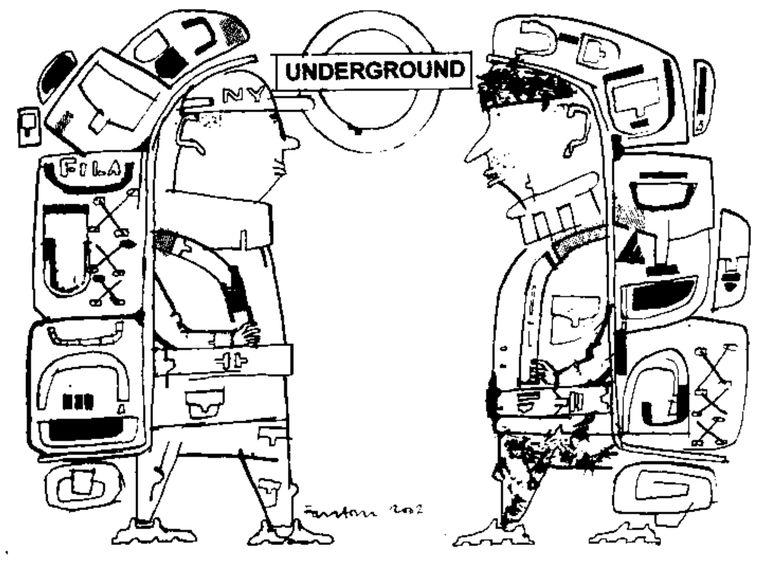
Sir,

Has anyone yet remarked on the uncanny resemblance between President George Bush and Commander Shore from Stingray?

PARSLEY THE LION,

Via email.

Scenes You Seldom See (7)



"Better take off our packs in case they injure someone..."

Tony Blah-blah-blah

Sir,

Mr Blair is right. The 1997 pistol ban (In the Tea Room, Eye 1050) was indeed one of "new" Labour's great achievements – nay, a benchmark, no less, setting, as it did, the tone and the standard for all their subsequent efforts. Nasty, vindictive, bullying, scape-goating, rant before reason, and, not least, absolutely pointless (see any recent crime figures).

And who's next for a great achievement – after the fox hunters, of course? Boxers? Fishermen? Satirical journalists? I think we should be told.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER TAYLOR,

Meols, Wirral.

A right Winger

Sir,

As a rabid, slavering West Wing junkie, I read Square Eyes' casual dismissal of it as "overrated" with interest. (Granted, he was actually talking about a different programme entirely, but he mentioned WW three or four times, so it's obviously on his mind.)

I think I see why he has missed the point of the show. Consider the premise. Here we have a drama series set in the White House (note: WW is a drama with some comedy elements: Friends is a comedy full stop. WW is clearly not, nor has ever been, Friends set in the White House) in which not only is the character of the president neither moronic, venal, sexually obsessed nor clinically insane, but his staff are portrayed as decent, intelligent people trying to do their jobs responsibly and well under terrific pressure. The conclusion is obvious: The West Wing is science fiction, if not indeed full-on fantasy. Given that, in ten years of (admittedly intermittent) Eye readership, I have never seen Square Eyes comment on a single programme in these genres, it seems clear to me that he simply mistook it for a "realistic" drama of the sort he prefers. Naturally, judged by the standards of "realistic" drama, WW falls short. So would Star Trek.

Vote for Bartlet!

Yours truly,
ZANDER NYROND,

Westbury, Wilts.

Coded message

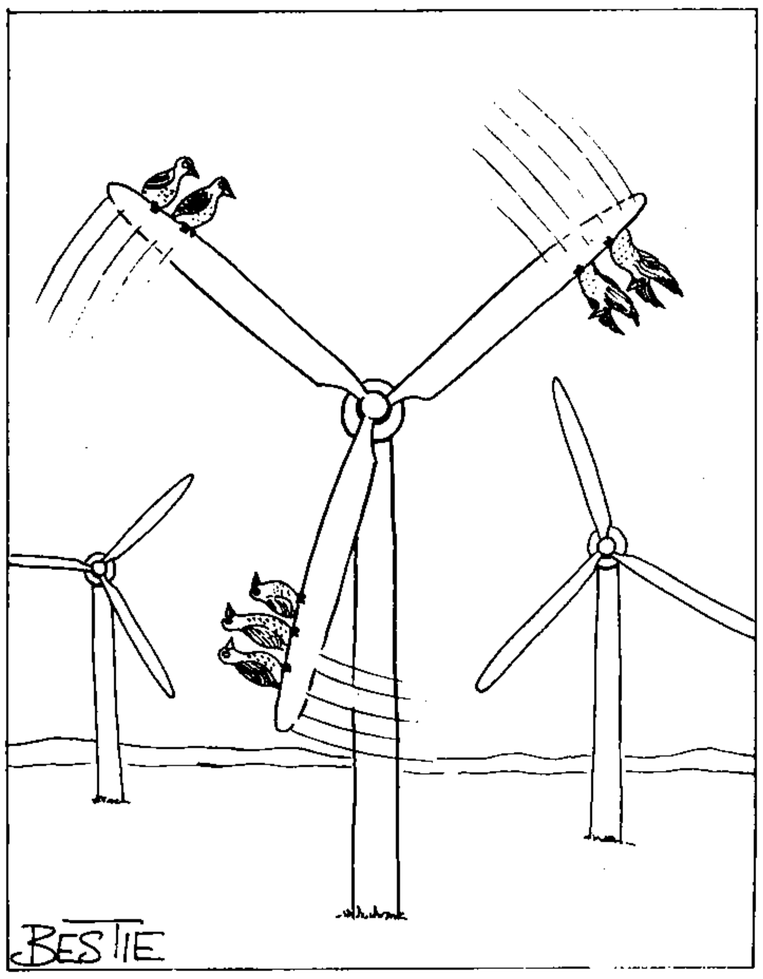
Sir,

Both Jeremy W. Brown (Letters, 1050) and Endeavour J. Thribb are correct re the Morse theme music.

The composer Barrington Pheloung cleverly counterpoints the morse (geddit?) for SOS with the main theme.

Yours etc,
MARTIN KENNEDY,

London W1.



Foreign flutter

Sir,

Nobody holds Mohamed Fayed in lower regard than I, but your article (1049, page 9) is based on a false premise. Although the government did indeed change the betting tax system at last year's budget to encourage gambling sites to base themselves in the UK, this applied only to bookmakers and not to online casinos which are still illegal in this country. The report from Sir Alan Budd's Gambling Review Body last summer included a recommendation that online casinos be legalised in the UK, but until such time as the government sees fit to implement this recommendation Fayed and other online casino operators (including William Hill and Ladbrokes) have no choice but to locate their operations overseas.

Yours faithfully,
ALISTAIR FLUTTER,
Business Development Director, Betgenius Ltd.
PS: Yes, that is my real name.

A pedant writes...

Sir,

At the risk of raising the practice of hair-splitting to an art form, I'd like to comment on the pedantry of one of your previous correspondents (Letters, 1050).

Dr David Fisher is of course quite right to point out that the term "semite" refers to a more diverse ethnic grouping than purely Jewish. However, all authoritative reference sources define anti-Semitism as specifically anti-Jewish. So in terms of common usage, Miss Blanchett did make a "Colemanball" and Eye did not.

I really must get out more.

Yours, doubly pedantically,
NICK MANSLEY,
Leatherhead, Surrey.

Words play

Sir,

If Malcolm Youd had nothing better to do than to translate the flags in the cartoon "Naval Scrabble" he might have taken 30 seconds or so to check the Official Scrabble Words dictionary and read the rules. If he had, he would have discovered that MARY and SHEILA are permitted words. As to HILARY, if neither of the other players had challenged it before another tile was laid, it would have stood under rule 8. If people want to be nitpicky, the least they should be is right. It was only a bloody cartoon for Christ's sake!

CLIVE A. BLAKE,
Wolfhill, Perthshire.

Mars attack!

Sir,

Re "Dumb Germany" (1050). Alas no popular chocolate bar has been named after the Roman god of war. The late lamented Mars Bar was named after its late creator, Forrest Edward Mars lately of Miami.

Sad but there you go...

Thank you.
ANTHONY BULLOCK,
Redmarley d'Abitôt, Gloucestershire.

"Bloody middle-of-the-road musicians!"

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

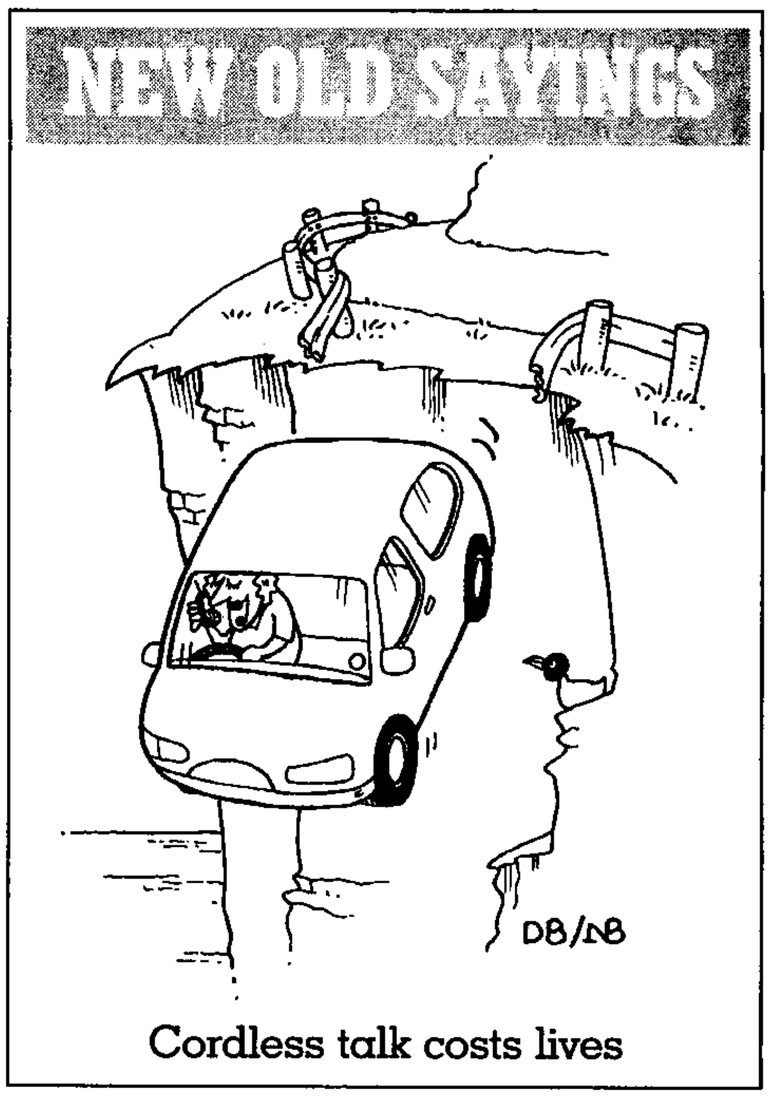
"He could have done a lot better there, but full marks to the lad."
RON ATKINSON, ITV
(Douglas Stevenson)

"I was literally nailed to my chair."
Feedback listeners panel, Radio 4
(Ken Williams)

"Michael Schumacher there, trying to go faster than himself..."
MARTIN BRUNDLE, ITV
(Steve Robbins)

"He's not the Carl Cort that we know he is."
BOBBY ROBSON, Ceefax
(Ken Moxham)

"... a shop that was founded in 1823 and still looks as old as ever..."
STEPHANIE HUGHES, RADIO 3
(Stephen Holby)



Seal of disapproval

Sir,

I notice that today's cover shows Tony Blair standing in front of a sign saying "Seal of the President of the United States". For some reason they appear to have confused the seal with another aquatically accomplished animal – it should of course read "Poodle of the President of the United States".

BOB CORY,
Via email.

One Heck of an error

Sir,

Issue 1050, page 4: "Gary Hart... has started a long prison sentence for his part in the accident at Great Heck, Teesside...." Great Heck, Teesside???? DOH! You are only about 60 miles out. Good job the rail companies aren't as dodgy with their geography.

Regards,
ROBIN PERRIE,
Via email.

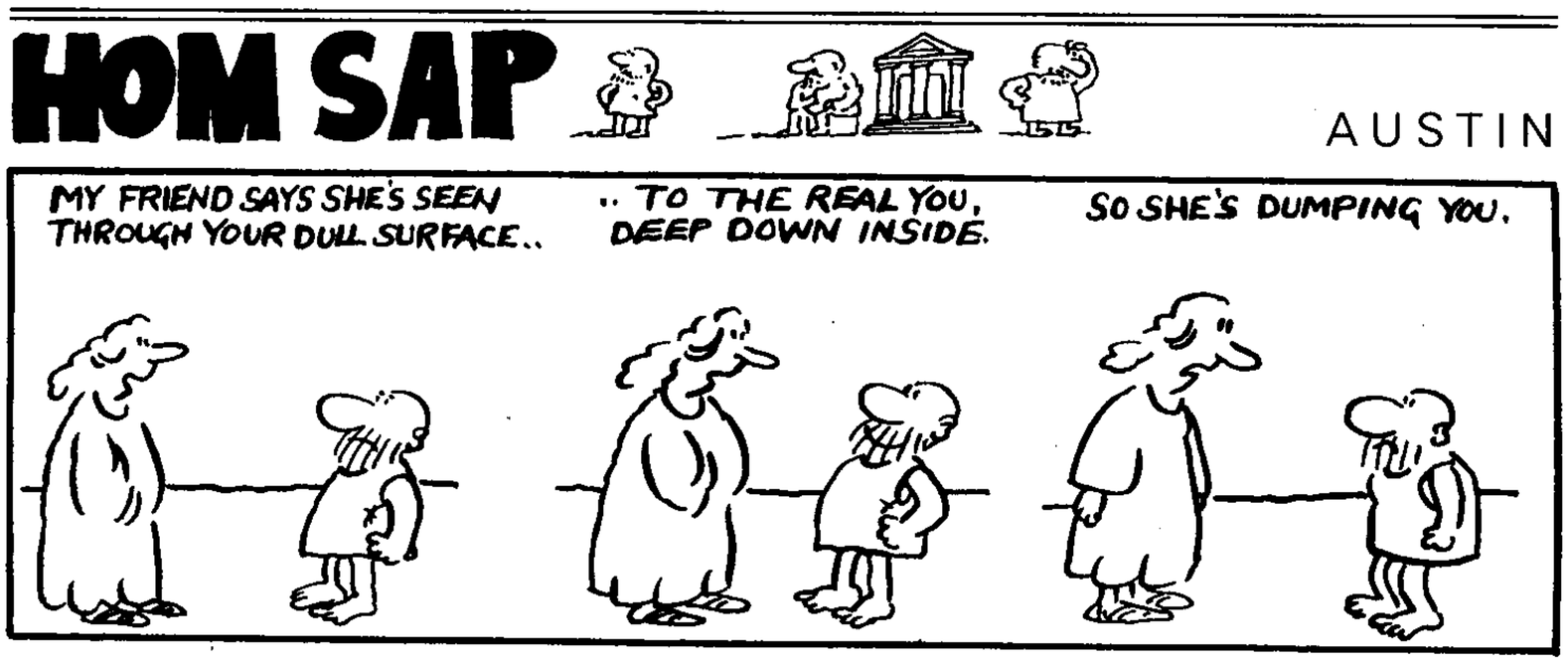
Sir,

In Eye 1050 you reported that driver John Fletcher was killed when his van was hit by a train on a line he had driven on to (same line and a year to the day as the Great Heck crash, incidentally). You then went on to claim that this accident could have been avoided with decent barriers, just as you have previously done concerning Gary Hart, whose Land Rover caused the Great Heck crash.

John Fletcher drove his van through a high brick wall to end up on the line. For a Ford Transit to breach a brick wall, he must have been travelling at quite a velocity and could only have been speeding. And if a brick wall is not a sufficient barrier, just what the hell do you want?

As for Gary Hart, the facts speak for themselves. He had one hour's sleep in the previous 24, due to contacting a woman on an internet chat line. Police tried to retrace Hart's journey and found they could not match his time while staying within the speed limits. The truth therefore is that even if the motorway barriers were twice the length they were, the incident would probably still have happened. Had Gary Hart kept his brains in his head instead of his prick then he would not be serving his derisory five-year jail sentence, 10 people would still be alive and their families' and friends' lives would not be shattered.

Yours faithfully,
LESLIE JOHN THOMSON,
Edinburgh.



Letter from **Damascus**

from Our Own Correspondent

OUR BRIGHT young president Bashar al Assad is working hard to dismantle some of the worst features of the oppressive system he inherited from his father, our gory old dictator Hafez who died a couple of years ago of natural causes – unlike tens of thousands of his victims.

But Bashar is surrounded by an old guard with deeply entrenched interests in the status quo. It is loath to permit any real reform. And those of us who hoped Bashar – who is no brute – would manage to assert himself were distressed by a new media law he put through last September.

Though it allows privately-owned journals (provided they obtain a licence), it also permits the prime minister to deny such licences for any reason "related to the public interest". Such judgement may prove tricky for a regime that has been in the business of systematically destroying the public's real interests since the Ba'athists seized power in 1963.

Any change of ownership of a publication, and even changes of key personnel such as chief editors, must be approved by the ministry of information. The law bans reports about "national security" and "national unity" and criminalizes the publication of "falsehoods". The signs are that the government will pursue a very broad definition of what constitutes a danger to our established "liberties and freedom".

Take the case of Nizar Nayyouf, a journalist from the coastal town of Lattakia, who in 1992 was sentenced to ten years' jail with hard labour. His crimes? "Disseminating false information" and "membership of an illegal organisation". His real offence though had been to upset the late president (who, despite the scientific evidence of his demise in 2000, continues to be hailed in official pronouncements as "Our Eternal Leader"). Mr Nayyouf had written a leaflet questioning the 99 percent-plus "yes" vote the Great Leader had achieved in a plebiscite on whether he should have a fourth seven-year term.

Mr Nayyouf's other crime was to help found a Committee for the Defence of Democratic Freedoms and Human Rights (CDF). While in prison he was severely tortured and denied medical treatment. Today he cannot walk without crutches and is nearly blind. He also suffers from Hodgkin's disease, liver disease, dermatitis and ulcers.

In an apparent show of the new liberalism of President Bashar, Nayyouf was freed last May. On 21 June he planned to hold a press conference to highlight atrocities committed over the years by our secret police, or *mukhabarat*. But the day before he was abducted in Damascus by plain-clothes security men while on his way to a clinic for treatment. They threatened him and tried to bribe him to stay silent. International protests prompted Bashar to free Mr Nayyouf after two days. Our national news agency, SANA, which of course *never* publishes "falsehoods", explained that the journalist had faked his detention "to remain in the centre of attention and under the spotlight".

Mr Nayyouf (who while in prison had won UNESCO's World Press Freedom prize and other prestigious awards) travelled to France in July for medical treatment. There he held a press conference and gave a series of interviews. Our newly enlightened authorities retaliated in September by issuing a warrant for his arrest on charges of "issuing false reports from a foreign country".

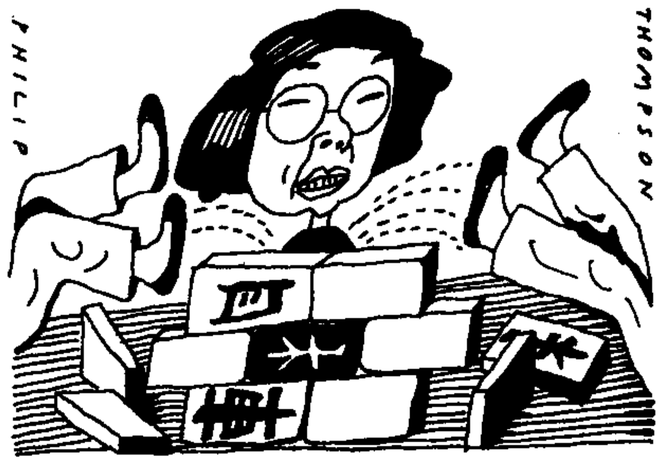
The regime has further blacklisted around 30 other Syrian journalists who had shown sympathy for the pro-democracy movement which sprang up after Hafez al Assad's death but which has since been largely suppressed. Official blacklisting means the journalists cannot work here.

Not that any of us is really surprised by any of this. The ruling Ba'ath party's constitution says: "The state will be responsible for protecting the freedoms of speech, publishing, association, protest and of the press within the limits of the higher interest of the Arab nation." And no one knows the nation's "higher interest" better than our regime!

FUNNY OLD WORLD

COMPILED BY **VICTOR LEWIS-SMITH**

o "One of my most successful patients was Madam G. K. Lee," explained Dr Han How-Chuan of the Uro-Gynaecology Centre at the KK Women's and Children's Hospital in Singapore. "She was the self-proclaimed mahjong queen of the city, and played her favourite game three times a week, but she could not control her bladder. When she felt the urge to urinate, she had to go immediately, so if the urge caught her in the middle of a game, she would yell 'lift up your legs everybody!' then promptly pee on the floor, wetting her dress, the chair, and the floor. Then her maid



would mop up the mess immediately, and her guests, who were used to this condition, would carry on as though nothing had happened.

"She ignored the problem for three years, but eventually her guests began abandoning her mahjong sessions, because of her behaviour, and the smell. Her husband and two teenage children also became increasingly embarrassed by her antics, and she eventually realised she would have to do something. That is when she first came to see me. I performed a simple operation on her, and now she has no trouble in making it from the mahjong table to the bathroom. If only all medical problems could be cured so easily." *(The Straits Times, 26/2/2002. Spotter: John Merritt)*

— o —

o *"The Chocolate Cock" by Enid Blyton.*

Once there was a piece of chocolate in the shape of a cock. The chocolate cock stood right in the very middle of a sweet-shop window, and all the children came to look at him. He was very proud of himself indeed.

"I am the Chocolate Cock!" he crowed. "I am the Chocolate Cock! I am the handsomest

bird in the world, for I am the Chocolate Cock!"

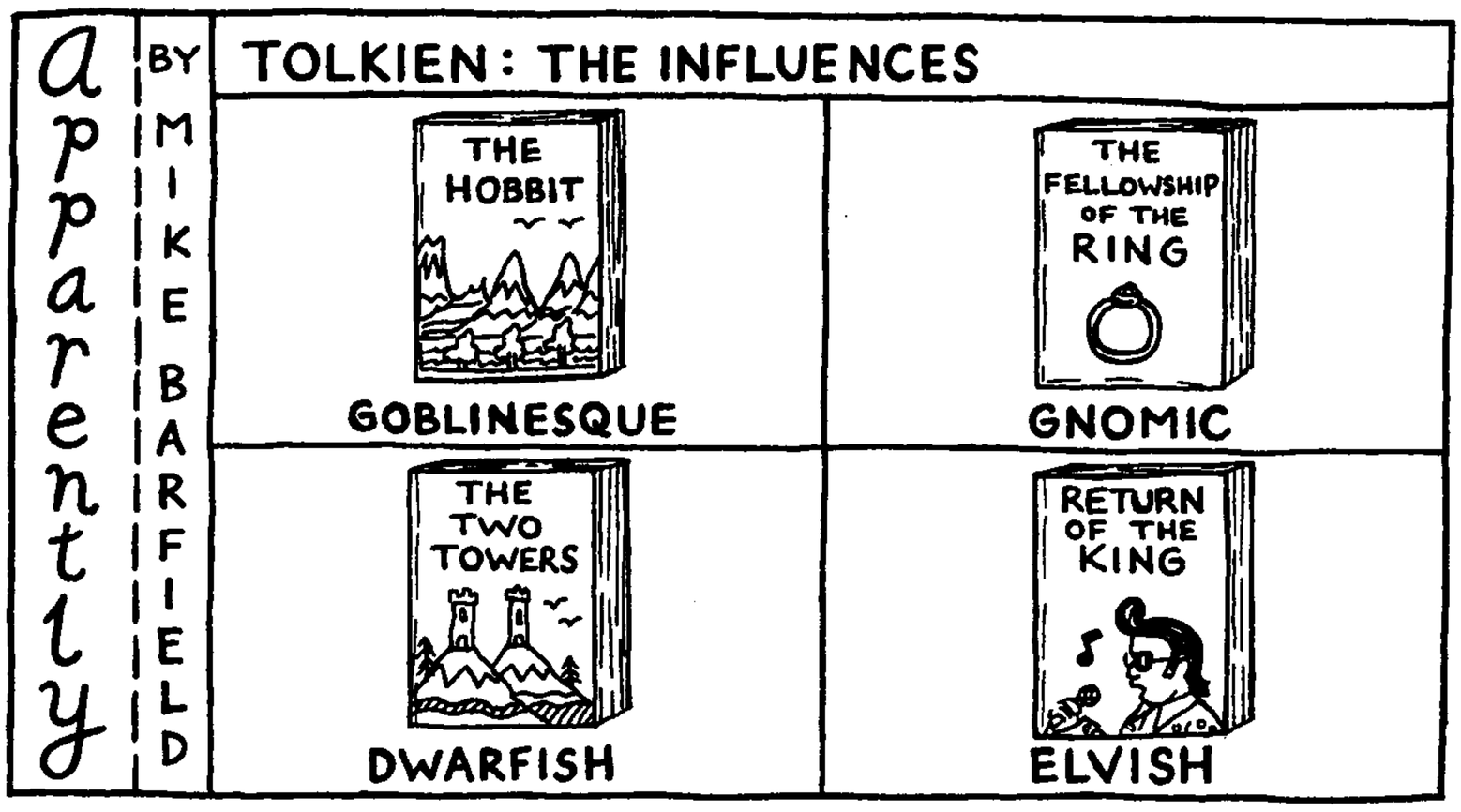
He was marked a shilling, and none of the children that came to look at the cock could afford to buy him. They just stood and looked at him. (From "The Talking Teapot and Other Tales" by Enid Blyton [London, 1938]. Spotter: Michael Moon)

— o —

o "There's no shame in losing a boxing match, but there is shame in losing your skin," the Ghana News Agency reported after a national super-featherweight bout in Accra had ended in chaos. "Veteran boxer Percy Oblitei Commey has become the laughing stock of the country after a championship audience watched his skin quite literally peel away during the fight.

"In the third round, Commey's opponent opened up a cut on his right cheek that his cornermen just couldn't close. Then his nostrils and right ear began to tear open, and within minutes he was bleeding profusely as the skin on the right-hand side of his face, down to his neck, suddenly peeled off and hung down in a flap on his chest. Instead of sympathising, the hostile crowd jeered him, because they knew why his skin had fallen apart. It was because he had been bleaching it."

The Agency report explained that "skin bleaching has been going on for a long time, ever since the days of British rule, but it has become much more widespread in the past few years. This fashion craze can be seen in various parts of Ghana, but overusing creams like Hydroquinone and Solaquin is not safe. These preparations do lighten the skin, but they also weaken it. Doctors are now seeing cases in which they cannot apply stitches to the skin because it has weakened to the point where it simply falls apart." *(Ghana News Agency, May 2001. Spotter: Wallace Brown)*



ST ALBION PARISH NEWS

Incumbent: Rev. A.R.P. Blair MA (Oxon)

Hullo,

That is, if I'm still allowed to say 'hullo' to people in my own parish!

Well, now I really know how Our Lord must have felt when all his followers turned against him!

One minute they were giving him a standing ovation, as he rode in triumph into St Albion's on his bicycle! The next, the crowd had turned ugly, demanding his head on a plate!

But why? Had he changed? OR HAD THEY?

That is what I want you all to think about over this Eastertide break!

And, do you know, I think in my mind's eye I can see some of those who are in that crowd, their faces contorted with spite and envy!

I don't want to name names, but isn't that Mr Galloway, I hear? And Mr Kilfoyle?

And what about Mr Chris Smith, once a trusted member of the PCC, and now a victim of his own bitterness and rancour?

I don't want to get personal about this, but frankly, it would do all these people a lot of good to remember what happened to Judas when he realised what an appalling mistake he had made!

I don't want to see these parishioners ending up having to go down to the local B&Q to buy a length of rope!

And listening to some of the recent talk around the parish, I even get the impression that some of you are falling into the temptation of thinking that there might be someone else who could do my job!

Well, let's just think that one through for

a moment, shall we?

Let us imagine that this unknown person is somehow catapulted into the vicarage, instead of me, the rightful vicar.

He may be very competent and conscientious about some matters, such as keeping the parish accounts, making sure we don't overspend and deciding how little to give the needy or the sick.

But is that really enough to qualify such a man to take over as shepherd of the flock?

What about the quality which the Rev. Dubya Bush's father, the Rev. "Doodoo" Bush, once called, in a beautiful phrase, "The vision thing"?

Yes, "vision" (from the Greek "visios", meaning a man with his head in the clouds). And what that means is the ability to see the problems of the whole world and to find solutions for them!

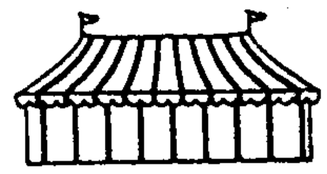
I just wonder in my heart of hearts whether the imaginary person whom we're all thinking about would be capable in his dour Scottish way of lifting his head above the bean-counting towards the distant horizon from whence cometh our help.

As it says in the Good Book, "Many may be called, but only one is chosen"!

I couldn't put it more clearly myself!

Yours ever, Tony

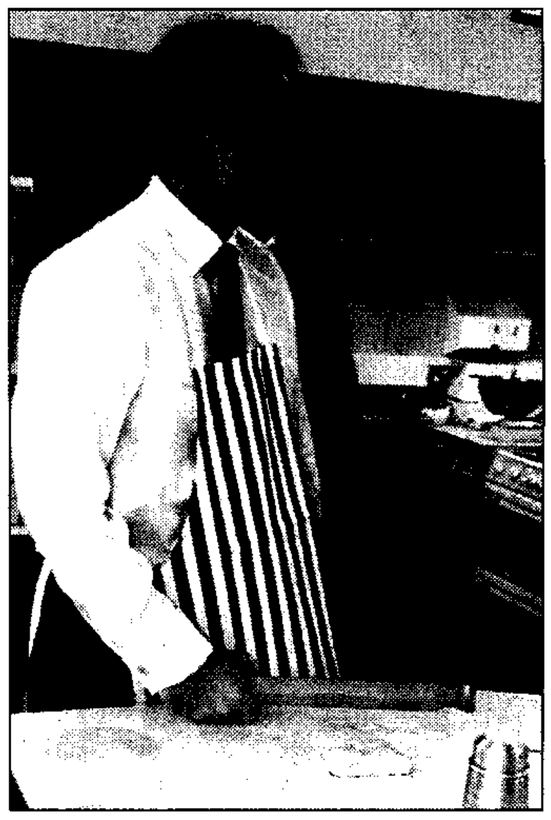
THE MILLENNIUM TENT



Mr Falconer writes:

The Millennium Tent is still for sale, if anyone is interested. It could be used for a variety of purposes, eg a venue for pop concerts (perhaps Alastair Campbell's friend Britney might be interested?!) or a conference centre for Asian businessmen where their contribution to parish funds could be acknowledged in award ceremonies and the like.

Meanwhile, could I PLEASE ask you all to refrain from dumping your unwanted fridges on top of it. And would the owner of the burnt-out C Reg Skoda please reclaim their vehicle before Mr Blunkett of the Neighbourhood Watch has to come round and see you. C.F.



Roll up! Roll up! The vicar helps to make the fudge for the Easter Fayre. A.C.

Parishioners were delighted to find that the vicar had made some interesting new changes to the lay-out of the Church (by local artist Mr Nougerede).

Birthday Honours...

... to our late incumbent, Rev. James Callaghan, whom older parishioners still remember as "Sunny Jim". I was delighted to welcome him and Audrey back to the vicarage for a little celebration to mark his 90th birthday. Cherie made time from her very busy career to heat up her new favourite dish, Chicken Hinduja with fried rice! Everyone made lovely speeches and it was a good thing no one was tactless enough to recall how Jim's time at the vicarage ended, with rubbish piling up down the street, unburied bodies in the churchyard and rats running everywhere! And what a lesson that should be for us all today! We can see from history what happens when parishioners fail to give 101 percent support to their vicar! The vicar is forced to bow out, and the parish is condemned to 18 harsh years under the Deaconess Thatcher!

Happy 90th, Jim! T.B.

St Albion's Women's Group

We were very honoured when Mrs Kinnock took time off from her busy new life in Europe to give us a very amusing talk on "Cooking With A Microwave". She particularly singled out the TV cook Delia Smith for being "out of touch".

"The woman of today," she said, "does not have time for complicated recipes like boiling an egg." Her Neil, she said, had to go out every night to expensive restaurants in Brussels, if he wanted something to eat!

There was much laughter at this quip. The Vicar's wife thanked Mrs Kinnock for her entertaining speech and agreed with her that in this modern age, it was quite wrong for women to be expected to waste their time boiling eggs for their husbands or partners, when they could be out doing something useful like taking part in much-needed litigation.

There was a retiring collection for Mr Byers, who is shortly to retire.

'A VAIN, FOUL-MOUTHED MANIPULATOR OF THE TRUTH'

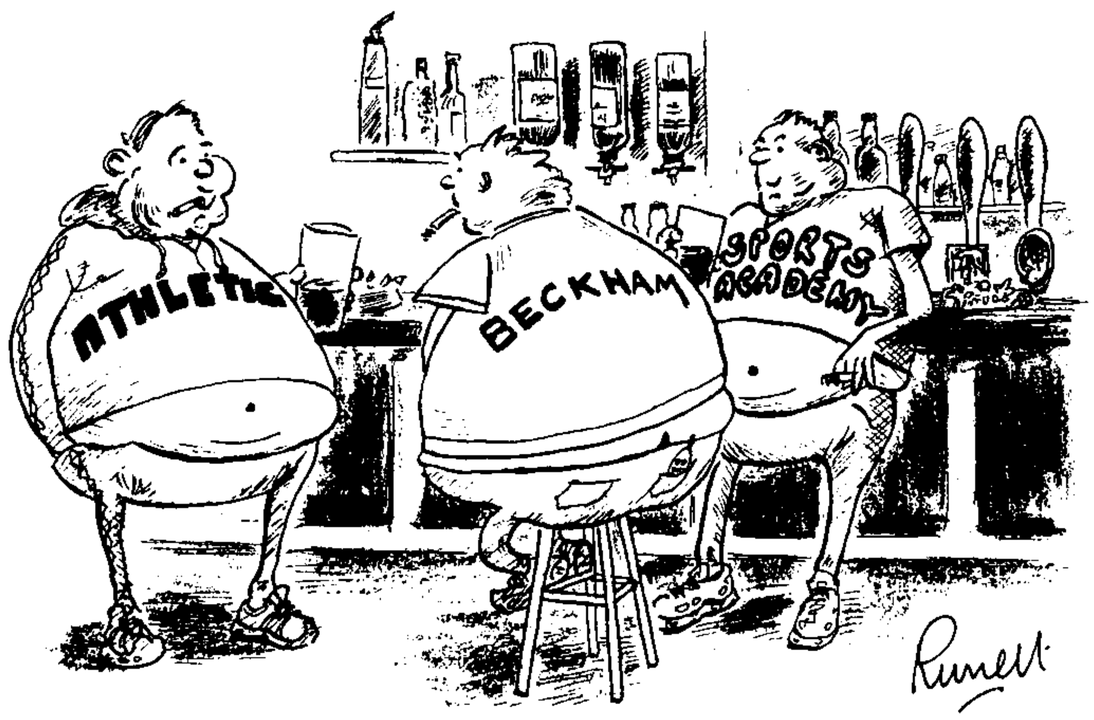
COURT'S HISTORIC VERDICT

A HIGH COURT judge yesterday branded one of Britain's top celebrities as "an unreliable witness who uses the press for personal publicity and who is given to coarse and vulgar temper tantrums".

Piers Morgan, he said, had told the court that he had printed pictures of Naomi Campbell "out of a duty to the public" which was demonstrably... *(Cont. p. 94)*

ON OTHER PAGES

● **Piers Morgan** on his shameful addiction to shares – "Yes, I am an addict," he admits, "but I am trying to clean up my act."



Daily Hate Mail

PURITY LACED WITH LEWDNESS...

by Britney Spears

FOR THE past few years, the Daily Mail has undoubtedly been the number one newspaper for its millions of fans.

But the newspaper has relied on its ability to sustain two completely different images – one innocent and one provocative. Whilst on the cover it may project an image of wholesome family values, inside, on the features page, we are treated to smutty articles and shameless features, accompanied by pictures of women in bras designed only to titillate its readers.

But this week, the Daily Mail was booed by readers for ignorning them. When one fan asked for "more articles attacking scantily-clad popstars accompanied by lots of pictures of scantily-clad popstars", the Mail told them that they were "already running these features every day".

Such rudeness is surely unacceptable? Is this the beginning of the end for the Daily Mail?

GLENDA SLAGG

FLEET STREET'S BITTER CHOCOLATE SOLDIER!!!

■ **NAOMI CAMPBELL!!!!? Ha! Ha! Ha! At last this brainless bimbo has been put in her place by winning her court case against the Daily Mirror *(Surely some mistake? Ed.)*. This guttersnipe in a glitzy gown has learned her lesson at last!!?!? Don't mess with the press, OK??!?**

■ THREE cheers for the judge who put the drug-crazed catwalk queen in her place!!?! That'll teach her to go to court and win!???! Privacy??!? Don't make me laugh, darling!!?!? Now we'll come round and take a photo of you on the toilet if we feel like it??!?! Geddit??!??! *(This is great. More please. Ed.)*

■ *COMMANDER PADDICK?!!?!!? Donchajuslovehim? Here's a copper who is glad to be gay and smokes the odd joint – just like we all do in this day and age!!! No wonder the carping killjoys and the moaning Middle Englanders want to see him strung up!!??!? Good luck, Commander – and keep on the beat. You're a fair cop!!?!? (Geddit???!)*

■ **COMMANDER PADDICK?!!???! Arenchasickofhim???! What a disgrace!!?!? No wonder crime is out of control when Brixton's boys in blue are a-cruisin' and a-woozin' around the back street!!?!?! Shame Commander!!??!?? If ever there was a bent copper it's you??!? Geddit???!?? So get off the beat and take up hairdressing!?!?!?!**

HERE they are, Glenda's Easter Honey Bunnies!!!?!

● **Professor Gunther von Hagens** – He's the nutty German who strips off the corpses for his exhibition. Here's one body with some flesh you might want to get your hands on!!?!?

● **Charles Saumarez-Smith** – He's the new National Gallery supremo. Come up and see my etchings, Charlie!!! Geddit???!?

● **Oliver Letwin** – Crazy name, crazy guy!??!?!

Byeeee!!!

DUDLEY MOORE

Exclusive To All Newspapers

IT's goodbyee to the pint-sized cuddly comic who became a sex thimble... Dagenham... club foot... Hollywood... four wives... sex-symbol... pint-sized... cuddly... Arthur... Hollywood... Bo Derek... Dagenham... Hollywood...
(continued on page 94)

Not On Other Pages

Oxford organ scholar and celebrated jazz pianist dies...

"As you know, geese deter intruders, but not half as well as armed geese"

TIDE TURNS IN FAVOUR OF NEW-LOOK TORIES

by Our Political Staff **Janet Daley-Telegraph**

MAKE no mistake. The signs are now multiplying in all directions that the Tory Party is on the brink of a massive breakthrough under its quietly dynamic new leader Ian Duncan Cough.

Though admittedly no orator, and totally lacking in charisma, Duncan Cough has in the past six months stamped his feet *(surely "his personal authority on the party"? Ed)* and redefined what it means to be a Conservative in the 21st century *(Keep going, this is perfect. C.M.)*.

In his mould-breaking speech to dozens of cheering supporters at Harrogate, Duncan Cough said: "Our party has always been the party of the poor, the disabled, the working man and the ethnic minorities.

"If Conservatism means anything it means an attack on the privileged classes with their top hats, their fox hunting and their public school mentality."

No wonder his words have galvanised the ranks of the Tory faithful as never before.

As one grass-roots activist told me after the speech, "I think I've come to the wrong conference."

YOU choose the new name for the caring, compassionate Tory Party

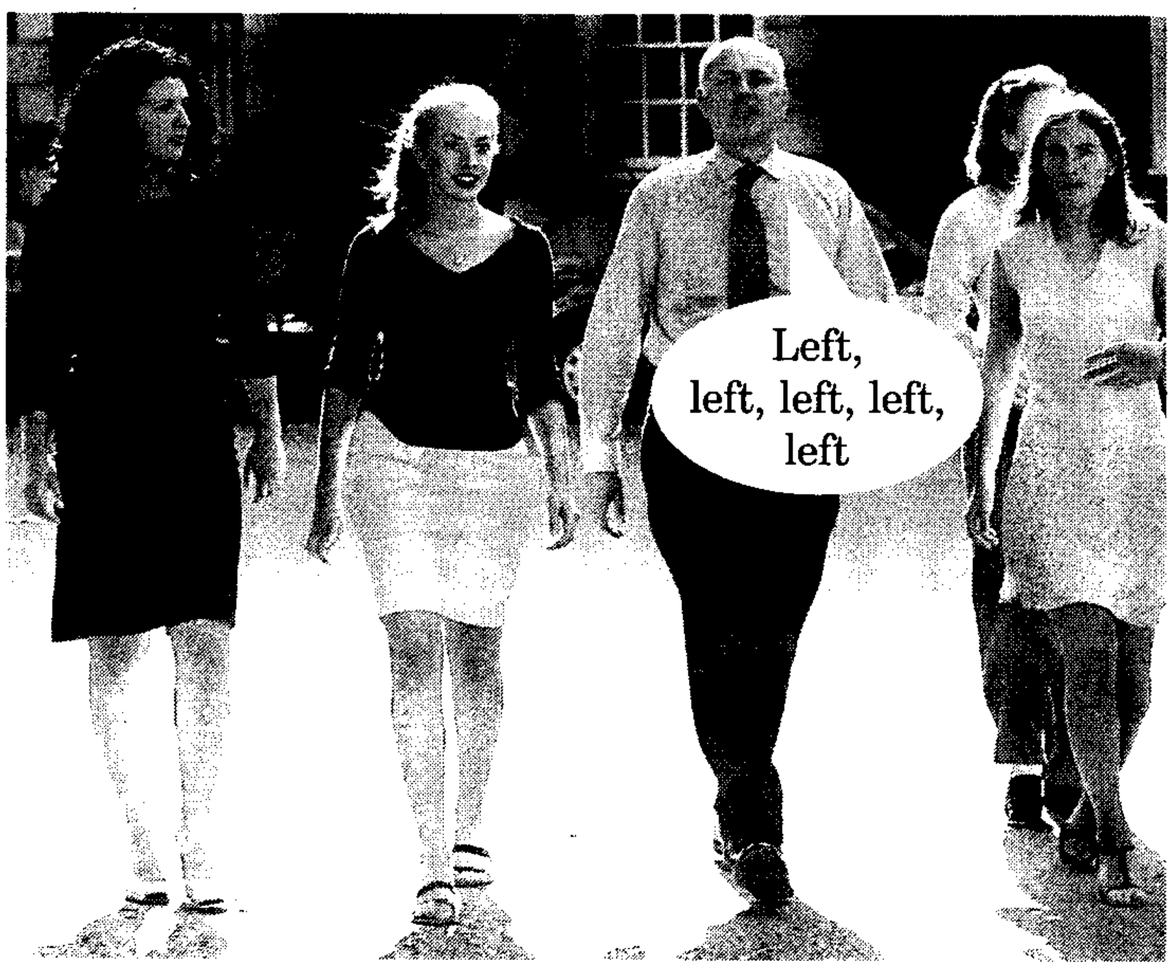
1. **Conservia**
2. **Accentory**
3. **Parcel Force**
4. **Coughs 'R Us**
5. **The Labour Party**

☎ **Ring this number now and tell us what you think.**

08987 42357 4218

All calls will be charged at premium rate and all profits will be used to build day care centres for gay toddlers.

NEW-LOOK TORIES ON THE MARCH



WORLD OF ART

'Macabre Horror Show' Goes Ahead

by Our Arts Staff **BRIAN R. SEWELL**

A CONTROVERSIAL exhibition of dead bodies has been put on public display in Harrogate under the title "The Conservative Party".

Originally created by the sinister Dr Keith Joseph in the 1970s, the exhibition features the lifeless torsos of dozens of members of the Conservative Party who have volunteered to donate their bodies to the project.

Nobodyworlds

Critics have called the exhibition "a disgusting and morbid spectacle appealing only to ghouls", but the organisers are defiant.

One Plastination Tories

"These people may be dead but they perform an educational role for young people today who want to discover how people get frozen in time."

The organisers claim that the anonymous corpses are now extremely popular and that the exhibition will be moving on to Westminster shortly.

Iain Duncan Stiff is 73.

WHY I WON'T BE TALKING ABOUT MY CHILDREN

by Iain Duncan Smith

UNLIKE Tony Blair, you won't catch me mentioning my children. Oh no. You probably didn't know I had any until I just mentioned them. Well I do. But I am not going to talk about them because I don't want to exploit them for political purposes. I'll leave that to Labour's Tony Blair!

By not mentioning them I think I'm being a rather better father and all-round family man than some other people I could mention, i.e. Euan Blair's Dad!

So when it comes to the election do remember the candidate who doesn't harp on about his children all the time – even though he has lots of them and could fill up whole books about how brilliant and talented they all are. But I choose not to discuss them at all.

© Iain Duncan Donutz

On Other Pages

Those unknown children in full **2-9**

A new story from the Queen of Romantic Fiction

Never Too Old...

by Dame Sylvie Krin

THE STORY SO FAR: The lovely Wendy Deng has persuaded her husband, the ageing media tycoon Rupert Murdoch, to accompany her to the world's most glamorous awards ceremony, the Oscars. Now read on...

"AND the award for the Best Assistant Make-Up Artist on a foreign language film goes to..."

"Jeez, Wendy!" barked the septuagenarian Australian mogul. "How many more of these flamin' pooftahs are we gonna have to watch picking up their gongs from that abo woman on the stage?"

"Shush, Lupert," his wife admonished him, placing a bread roll in his mouth. "Evelyone listening!"

Rupert slumped back in his chair and tried to loosen his bowtie. It had been a mistake to drink so many bottles of the Santa Monica Lewinsky Californian Chardonnay before taking their seats. They had been in the vast room for 5 hours and it felt like 50. Still, it would soon be over. And with any luck he could be tucked up in bed reading the company accounts from his global empire before midnight.

But his comforting reverie was interrupted by the strains of the Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra playing a tribute to the victims of 9/11, specially composed by Marty Snorheim, who wrote the award-winning score for the action thriller "The Mutant Chainsaw Death Massacre".

"Isn't this exciting, Lupert?" exclaimed Wendy, as her apricot petal lips broadened into a seductive oriental smile. "And we're only halfway through the awards."

"Christ! But *then* can we go home? I'm as pooped as a kookaburra who's lost his donger up a eucalyptus tree."

"No! No! Lupert! Then we go dancing! Party time for you, Lupert. Twist the night away at Vanity Fair..."

"VANITY Fair? Certainly Mr Murdoch. Do come in." The portly figure of the world's most famous magazine editor, Graydon Carshole III, extended a limp hand.

"May I introduce you to Hymie Schotzenberger and his wife Guantanamera? Also Mrs Tutzi von Bulow and her friend Pinky Wagstaffe?"

Although the lovely Wendy was in her element in the glitzy crowd at Moron's Restaurant, spotting the stars and chatting with the younger celebrities, Rupert was ill at ease.

His fashionable open-neck shirt, which Wendy had insisted he wore instead of his tuxedo, made him feel uncomfortable.

"Is your father alright?" asked Mrs Jerome Wildebeest, the celebrated Hollywood columnist, offering Wendy a glass of water.

"It's very good of you to have brought him. It's so good for old people to get out and about and meet some new faces. I've brought my mother. She's asleep in a chair

over there next to Dame Judi Dench. Shall I take him over for you?

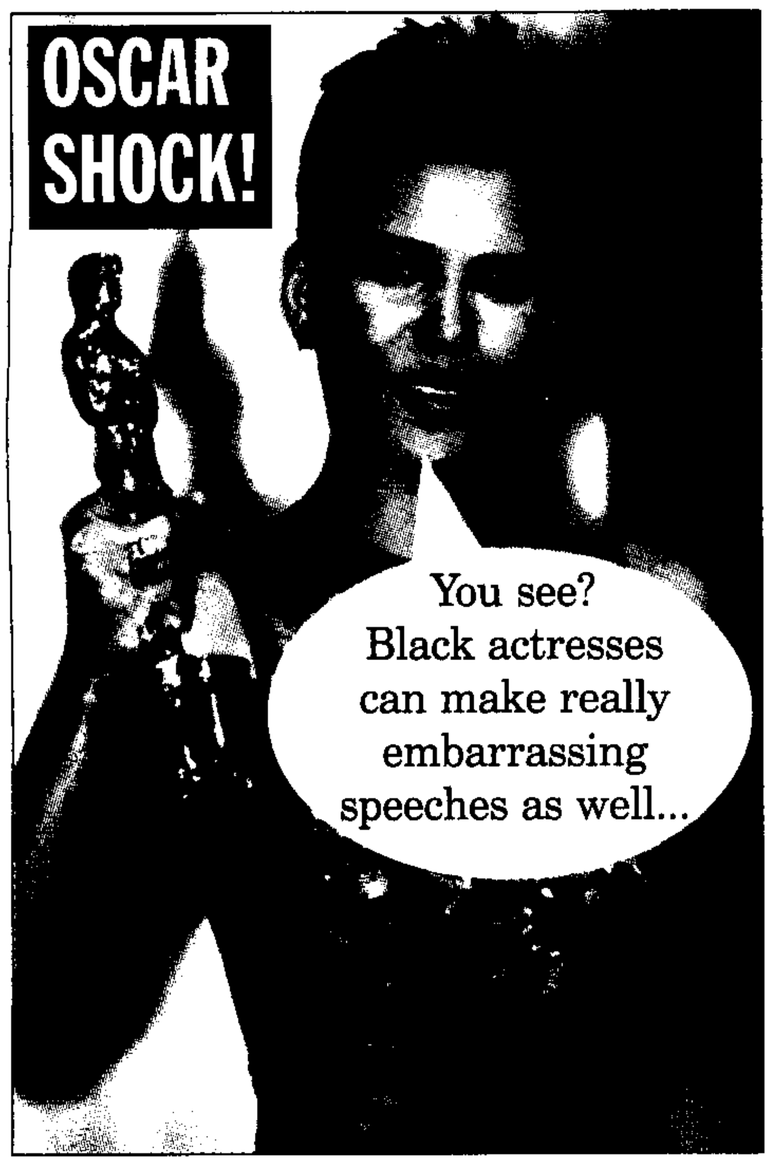
"Come on, dear," she shrilled into the ear of the owner of the Times newspaper. "We'll let your daughter go off now and find some young nice man to dance with."

"No, no, no," interjected the exotic temptress from the land of bird's nest soup, "Lupert dance with me. Until he drop!"

Wendy was as good as her word and, snatching him away from the astonished gaze of Mrs Wildebeest, she dragged him onto the dance floor, where a raucous band were about to launch into a frenzied rap version of the theme from the movie Titanic.

"Women and children first!" she cried excitedly. "Old men go down with ship. Ha, ha, ha!"

Rupert, overcome with nausea and fatigue, gasped for breath as the waves seemed to close over his head... *(To be continued)*

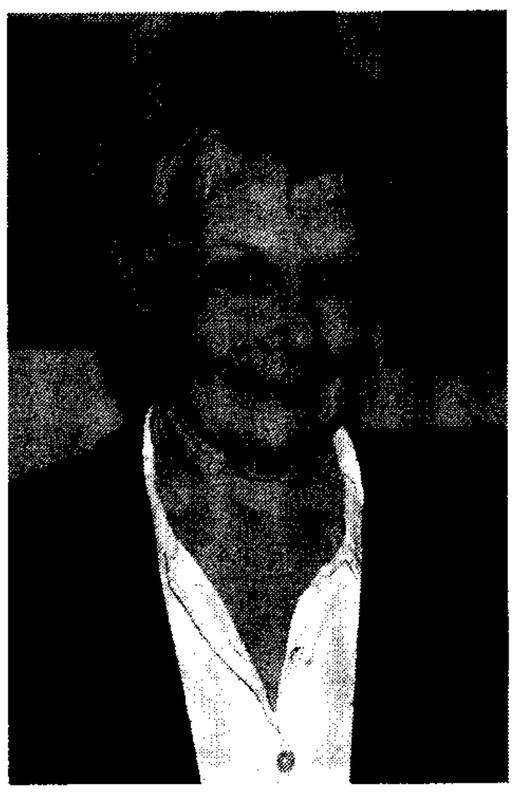


Dame Judi Snubbed In Oscar Farce

by **Our Entire Staff**

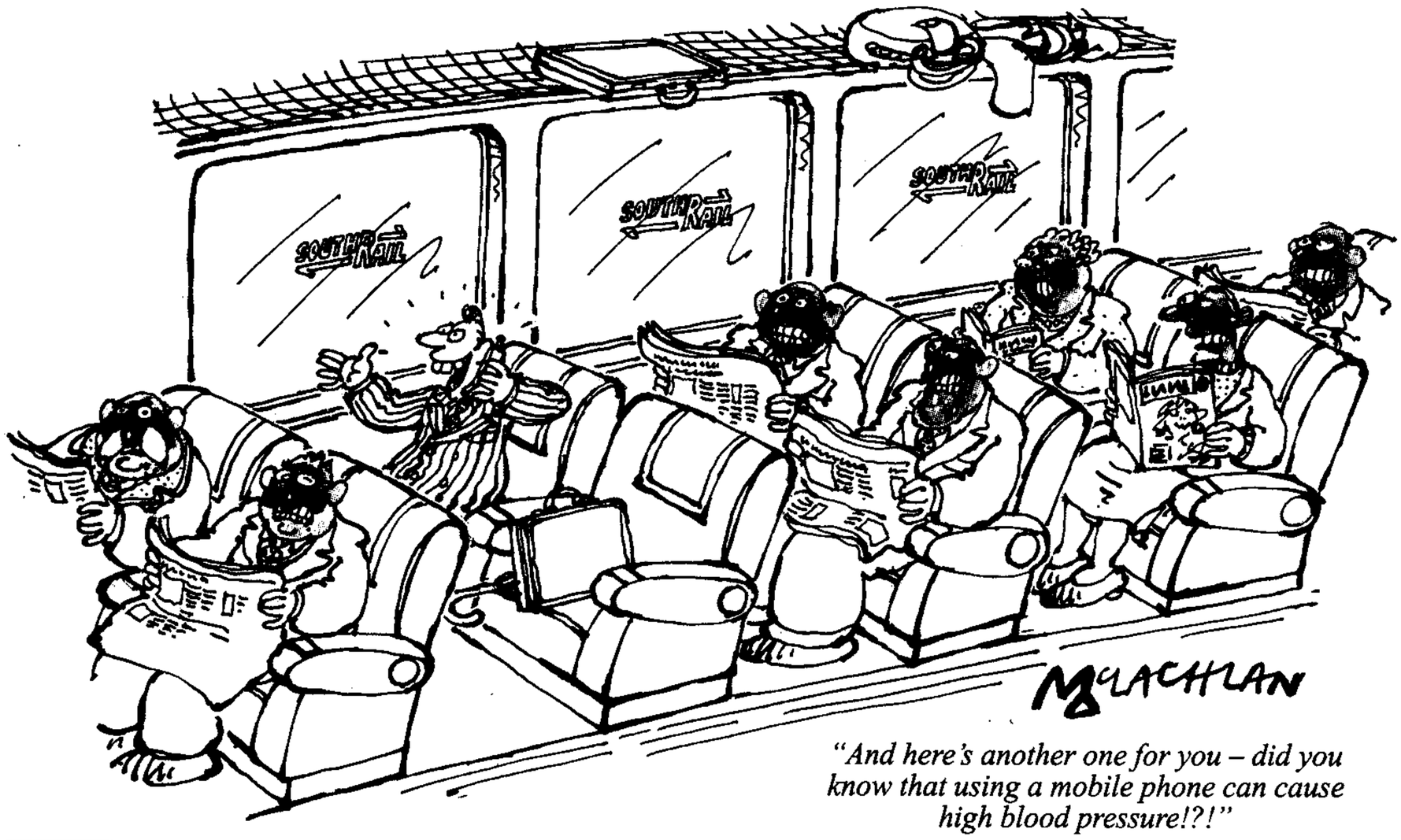
IN ONE of the greatest scandals in cinema history, Britain's finest ever actress Dame Judi Dench was deliberately ignored by the judges in last night's Oscar ceremony.

Looking radiant in a black silk designer dress personally created by top designer Veronica Wadley, Dame Judi fought back her tears as hundreds of awards were given to black actors and actresses who aren't



even British. Commentators were aghast when her sensitive portrayal of Gandalf in *The Lord of the Rings* failed to be nominated even in the "Best Beard" category.

Other British actors cruelly ignored by the judges included Dame Maggie Smith, Dame Kate Winslet, Dame Ian McKellen and the late Dame Rupert Murdoch, whose sad decline into senility was movingly portrayed in the non-award-winning film *Three Weddings And A Forthcoming Funeral.*



"And here's another one for you – did you know that using a mobile phone can cause high blood pressure!?!"

POETRY CORNER

In memoriam Kenneth Wolstenholme, Football Commentator

So. Farewell
Then
Kenneth Wolstenholme.

Famous commentator
On the World Cup 1966.
The greatest moment
In the entire history
Of sport.

Those 14 words you said
Have passed into
Legend.

Unfortunately I
Cannot remember
Them all.
But the last ones were
"They think it's all over.
It is now."

It would be a fitting epitaph
To put on your
Gravestone.

E.J. Thribb (4-2)

CONSIGNIA – 'HUGE INCREASE IN TURNOVER PREDICTED'

by GAVIN FIRST-CLASS-STAMP

DESPITE losing millions of pounds every day, Consignia bosses have confidently predicted a huge increase in the number of letters delivered over the next few months.

"Almost all of these will take the form of P45s to our staff," said a delighted Consignia chairman, "along with letters to sub-postmasters telling them that their post office has been earmarked for closure."

Mike Turner

The Last Post?

the PREMIERSH*TS

PAUL WOOD

PRE-WORLD CUP PARTY
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT, DROPPED FROM THE ENGLAND SQUAD...
THE MANAGER DOESN'T WANT ANY MEMBER OF THE TEAM TO APPEAR RACIST-
WHY THE IKEA DESIGNING, PORN LOVING, ABBA PLAYING, BLONDE HAIRED BJORN BORG BASTARD DOESN'T KNOW WHAT HE'S ON ABOUT!
BEATS ME... ALRIGHT LOVE

ME AND MY SPOON

THIS WEEK

NO. 94 SALMAN RUSHDIE

During your many years in hiding did you take any spoons with you?

This is a stupid question, and typical of the British press, obsessed with gossip and trivia. In what other country in the world would a serious literary figure be asked to give his opinion of spoons? Can you imagine Mario Vargas Llosa being subjected to this kind of inquisition?

We're doing him next week.

You're just trying to make me look stupid. I expect you wish I had been killed.

No, on the contrary, I just wanted to ask you what sort of spoons you liked.

That is the most insulting question that has ever been put to me.

Do you like British spoons?

Not at all. The British appropriated the *sponi* from Uttar Pradesh where for centuries it had enjoyed a cultural, religious and mythical resonance, and then turned it into a symbol of imperialist oppression.

You live in New York now, are the spoons better there?

Very much so. In New York we have beautifully designed, modern, democratic, practical and long-lasting spoons. Not like in Britain where everything is cheap, imitative and shoddily made. Your whole society in Britain stinks just like your filthy, greasy spoons. God bless American spoons.

Has anything amusing ever happened to you in connection with spoons?

No.

NEXT WEEK: Gabriel Garcia Marques – *"Me And My Kettle".*

OLD WOMAN DEMANDS 'RIGHT TO LIVE'

by Our Medical Staff **Hugh Thanasia**

IN AN extraordinary legal case currently being heard in London, an old woman, described as "terminally washed-up", yesterday pleaded that she be allowed to "live with dignity".

The woman, known to the court only as "Mrs T", told the judge that although she could no longer make speeches, she could still communicate with the outside world thanks to the miracle of issuing regular statements to the media to whom she is connected 24 hours a day.

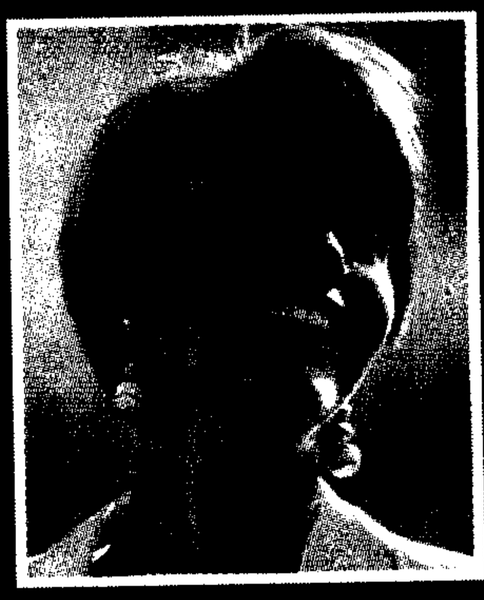
HOPELESS

But an independent medical expert, Dr Iain Duncan Smith, pleaded that the woman's life-support system be turned off at once.

"She has led a very full life," he said, "but she no longer has anything useful to contribute, particularly on the subject of Europe or anything else.

"The really compassionate course," Dr Duncan Stoat continued, "would be to turn her off and put us out of our misery."

POLLY FILLER



Not Columnist of the Year 2002

I AM proud to announce to my readers that I did *not* win anything at all at this year's B&Q/Kwik-Fit UK National and Regional Press Awards – and I would like to thank all the judges who did not vote for me.

Because this year's awards were a FARCE – and all the winners should feel thoroughly ashamed of themselves.

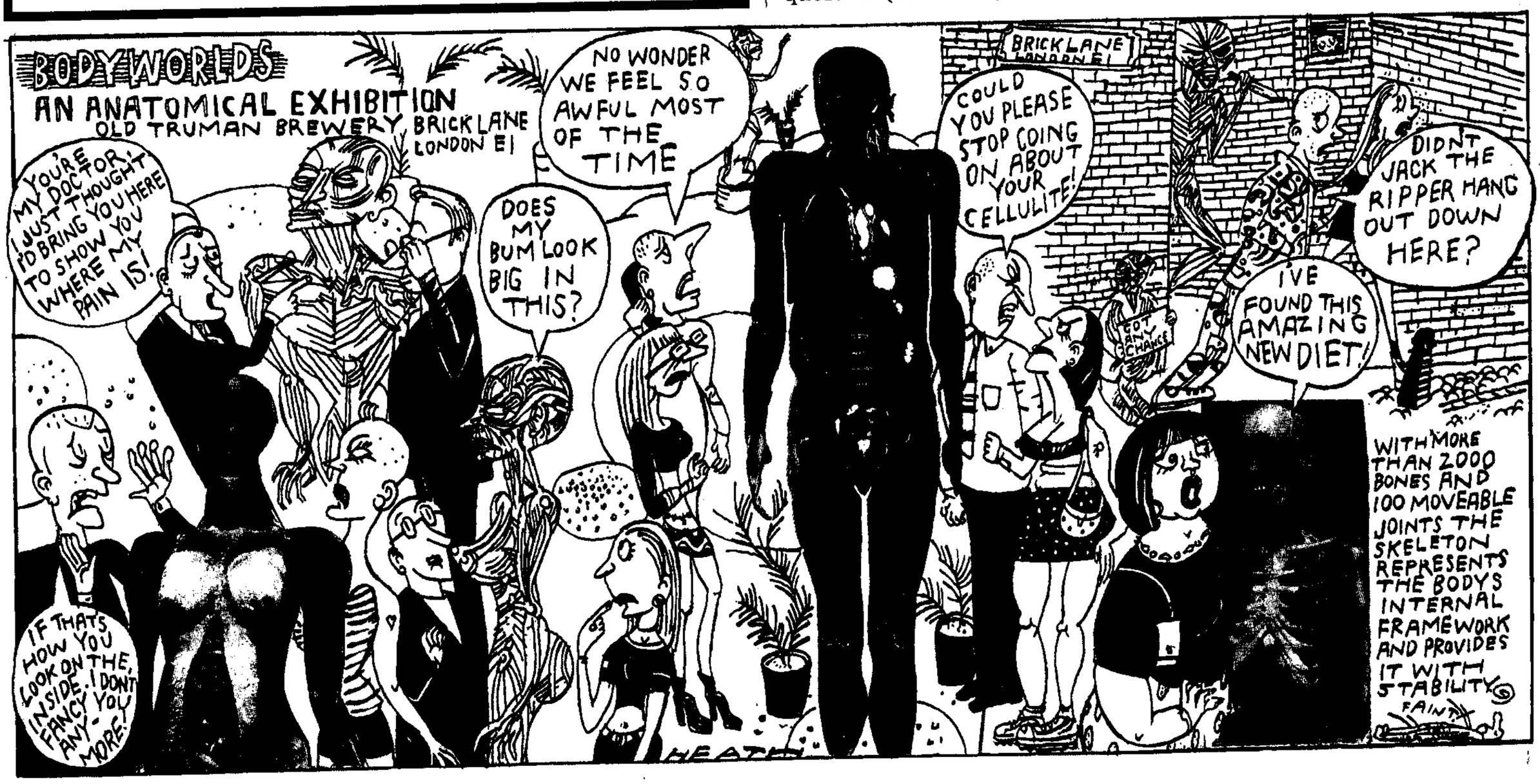
Let us take one category at random – Woman Columnist Writing about Being At Home With Young Children (Broadsheets). It was clear to all of us at the dinner that the judges in this category (mostly failed journalists who couldn't get a gardening column in their local freesheet!) had decided that it was Ms Buggins' turn, and awarded it accordingly. Everybody cheered (ironically of course) when the bimbo in question (no names, but think bottle-blonde!!) went up to accept her tacky piece of fibreglass. And when they read out her column about the day her au pair put the hamster in the washing machine, the audience all laughed (but *at* her rather than with her! Sad really!).

EVERYONE who I spoke to agreed that the award *should* have gone to the journalist who had written the touching account of how her life had changed for ever on 9/11. The way she had explained the tragedy to her wide-eyed toddler Charlie (Bless!) and tried to get her useless partner Simon to turn over to CNN for the news (and stop watching Pro-Celebrity Salad-Tossing from the Maldives presented by Paul Ross) was almost unbearably moving. In fact, a lot of people said they couldn't bear to read it.

What really upsets me is not that I have been overlooked – hey, really, who cares? I've got a life – but I feel that YOU, the reader, has been slapped in the face. I know that this is the most widely read and best-loved column in journalism today, and to ignore that fact is a calculated insult to the millions of ordinary men and women of all creeds and colours who deserve better than to see some talentless airhead walk off with the top prize. I'm sorry everyone.

So let's hear no more about these discredited awards because no one is interested in the meaningless ritual backslapping that so demeans our profession.

© Polly Filler. Winner of the DynoRod/Stannah Stair Lift Lifestyle Journalism Award 1987


BODY WORLDS
AN ANATOMICAL EXHIBITION
OLD TRUMAN BREWERY BRICK LANE LONDON E1
YOU'RE MY DOCTOR, I JUST THOUGHT I'D BRING YOU HERE TO SHOW YOU WHERE MY PAIN IS!
NO WONDER WE FEEL SO AWFUL MOST OF THE TIME
DOES MY BUM LOOK BIG IN THIS?
IF THATS HOW YOU LOOK ON THE INSIDE. I DONT FANCY YOU ANY-MORE!
BRICK LANE LONDON E1
COULD YOU PLEASE STOP GOING ON ABOUT YOUR CELLULITE!
GOT ANY CHANGE
DIDNT JACK THE RIPPER HANG OUT DOWN HERE?
I'VE FOUND THIS AMAZING NEW DIET!
WITH MORE THAN 2000 BONES AND 100 MOVEABLE JOINTS THE SKELETON REPRESENTS THE BODYS INTERNAL FRAMEWORK AND PROVIDES IT WITH STABILITY
FAINT
HEATH

THE BOOK OF SHARON

Chapter 94 – The Feast Of The Peace-over

1. And lo, it came to pass that the rulers of the Arab-ites took counsel amongst themselves, saying "Let us journey unto the city of Bei-rut, that we may talk of how to bring peace between the Araf-ites and the children of Israel."

2. "Though, to be frank, we cannot see much hope in it ourselves."

3. "And let us therefore call our brother Ara-fat, even he that weareth the towel upon his head, and summon him to Bei-rut to take counsel with us."

4. But Ara-fat was be-seiged in his tent in the place that is called Ram-allah, which is to say "the hole of hell".

5. And all around the tent of Ara-fat was camped a mighty host of Israelites, even with their chariots of fire.

6. For Sharon, that ruleth the children of Israel (at time of this Testament going to press), had decreed that Ara-fat must remain a prisoner within his tent, even as the desert fox must remain in his lair when the dogs seek him out to devour him.

7. But then a brilliant idea cometh to Sharon, as in a dream. "Why do I not letteth mine enemy, even Ara-fat, depart in peace from the land of Is-rael, to go to Bei-rut?"

8. "And, then, nudgeth, nudgeth, winketh, winketh, we decide that it cannot be safe to allow him to return."

9. "In this wise, he will have to remaineth in Bei-rut, which is a very dangerous place, if thou knowest what I mean?"

10. So Sharon rose up and sendeth unto Ara-fat, "Go forth, even to Bei-rut. For I will not stand in thy way, nor the children of Is-rael likewise."

11. But Ara-fat smelleth an rat, and sayeth unto Sharon, "I did not get where I am today by falling for that old trick."

12. So Ara-fat abideth where he was, even in Ram-allah. And thus the threat of peace passed from the land of Is-rael, which is why it was called from that time forth the feast of the Peace-over.

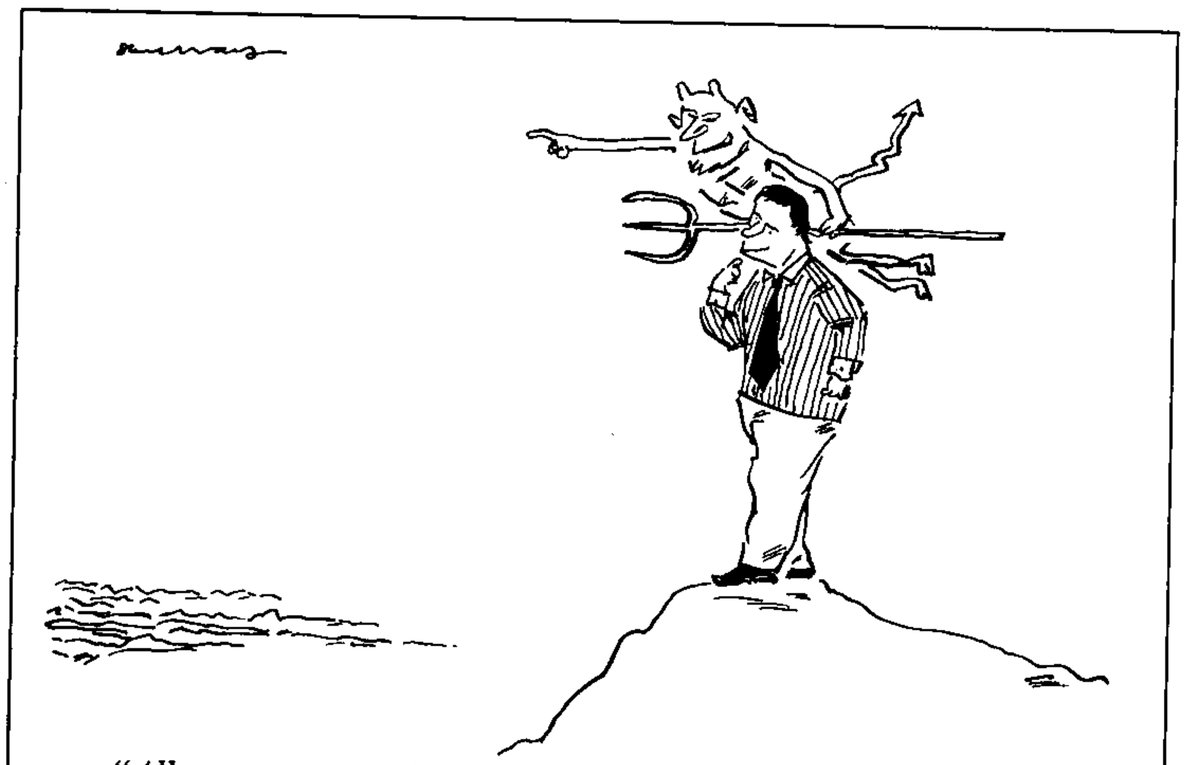
EXCLUSIVE TO ALL NEWSPAPERS

STEPHEN BYERS An Apology

IN RECENT months, in common with all other newspapers, we may have given the mistaken impression that Stephen Byers' decision not to compensate the shareholders of Railtrack showed a complete lack of understanding of how the markets work, would irrevocably damage private sector confidence in the Government, and would in the long-term cost the British taxpayer dearly.

We now realise that Stephen Byers's decision to compensate Railtrack shareholders to the tune of three hundred million pounds, shows a complete lack of understanding of how the markets work, will irrevocably damage private sector confidence in the Government, and will in the long-term cost the taxpayer dearly.

We apologise for any confusion caused and any confusion in the future when we attack Stephen Byers for his decision not to bail out Railtrack's successor with millions of pounds of Government... etc, etc.



"All you can see, plus your kids in the school of your choice"

Eye Team Sweeps British Press Awards

IN WHAT was an extraordinary evening for Britain's top-selling fortnightly newspaper, no fewer than 24 of Private Eye's writers paid £70 to be nominated for the awards given by some trade paper that nobody's heard of. *(Surely the UK Press Gazette? Ed.)*

Your newspaper once again swept the board with its star team of top reporters, columnists and commentators.

SPACE: Just one of the Eye's triumphant writers

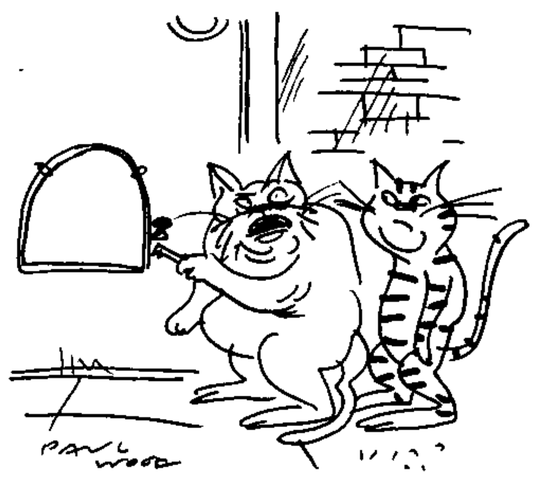
■ **PHILIP SPACE**, highly commended for his "unique ability to write 1000 words on any subject in less than half an hour".

■ **PHILIPPA COLUMN**, nominated for "Scoop of the Year" for her outstanding story about how Peter Mandelson was thinking of buying a new dog.

■ **MARTIN DULMAN**, short-listed for the nominations for "Art Critic Of The Year" for his "inspired coverage of the Brit Art Installation scene".

■ **ERNEST ("E.I.") ADDIO**, highly nominated for "Lifetime Achievement In Sports-writing Award". Had he won, his citation might have read, "The 20th Century produced no more imaginative sports reporter than the man who introduced into the language the phrases 'tight-lipped', 'ashen-faced' and 'soccer supremo'."

■ **EMANUEL STROBES**, editor, nominated to pick up the £15,412 drinks bill for the Eye table after it became clear that they had won no awards at all.



"Of course, in my day you could leave the cat flap open"

DIARY

STEPHEN BYERS' EASTER AT HOME

I think that my critics forget that I am not only a senior Cabinet Minister, widely tipped for the "top job" (I never said that!) but also a fully-operational human being. So it's always nice to be able to prove that particular point by taking the odd day off from my Ministerial responsibilities, putting on a favourite light-weight suit, loosening the old tie a bit and "relaxing at home" with my partner.

I look out of the bedroom window. "Spring is here," I announce to my long-term partner (I am not in a position to divulge her name, and certainly do not intend to reveal it at this juncture).

"Great" she replies, "So Spring is finally here!"

"I don't know what leads you to that conclusion," I counter.

"But you just said!" she replies, unhelpfully.

"There is no point taking these statements out of context" I point out, "Frankly, I have said nothing to justify your interpretation."

"But you said 'Spring is here'. I heard you!"

"It is not – I repeat NOT – my intention to get bogged down in detail," I correct her, with the due courtesy one's partner has a right to expect, "I will not allow this distraction to divert me from today's challenging agenda."

I nip downstairs and take detailed notes of our recent discussion. I then look back through these contemporaneous notes, and with relief find myself able to confirm that what I said was what I had always maintained that I had said, viz, *"Spring may or may not be here, this is a matter for others to decide."*

I shout up to my partner that I have discovered these detailed notes, and that unfortunately they confirm that her own recollection of our discussion was much awry, leaving her in an awkward situation. "But in the interests of our long-term future together, I have decided for the time being to overlook your, shall we say, less than complete version of events, and to get on with the task in hand," I announce.

She says nothing, which I take as an overdue acknowledgement that I am right, and that the perceived conflict in our accounts was owing to a misconception arising from her own erratic recall. Once again, I have set us back on the right track for real improvements in our relationship. People-management is, for me, an essential tool in the male/female bonding process.

My turn to do the dishes! And it is a responsibility I do not intend to duck. But first I must find the appropriate, 21st century, way of dealing with these matters. Luckily, overnight I have developed an exciting new overall strategy for doing the dishes, based on a wholesale restructuring of existing resources. Instead of the energy-wasting old system of "stacking", "washing", "drying" and finally "putting away", I reduce it to a streamlined two-tier process, first "smashing the dishes" and then "throwing them into the bin".

Incidentally, if this system works as well as I think it will, I have every intention of introducing it into Air Traffic Control, which has long needed a shake-up.

Naturally, the old forces of reaction vis-a-vis my partner greet this exciting innovation with ill-suppressed resentment. "Where are the dishes?" she says when she arrives downstairs. "What have you done with my dishes?"

I explain to her in words of one syllable that I have smashed them and thrown them into the bin, as we had agreed earlier.

"We never!" she protests. Happily, I have already allowed for this eventuality. I nip into my office, and after five minutes am able to produce detailed notes showing that my version of events is entirely as I had previously described.

"B-b-but what the hell are we going to eat on?" she screams, unguardedly.

I paused for thought in formulating an appropriate response. "That is something you should have considered before you decided to plough forward with this initiative," I corrected her.

Easter Sunday has long been a keymark date in our annual calendar. From a purely religious point of view, it commemorates the day Jesus Christ drew a line under premature news of his own burial. It serves as a reminder to those of us who are, like him, attempting major reprioratisation initiatives.

"Happy Easter," I say to my partner, presenting her with a seasonal gift.

"But what's that?" she says.

"It's an Easter Egg," I respond, after a full examination of the facts.

"But there's no chocolate left. It's just a lot of empty wrapping. You've eaten it yourself!" she says.

I strongly refute this damaging allegation. "I have not eaten it myself. This is the Easter Egg of the future," I insist, "We must not be hidebound by tradition. We are now in a position to put in place a structure for the long-term restructuring of the whole tradition Easter Egg. It is a challenge I intend to seize with both hands."

"B-b-but there's chocolate smeared all over your cheeks!" my partner protests, thrusting a mirror in my face.

"I am now in a position to confirm that I have at no time denied, or sought to deny, that I ate the chocolate in question. To consume it was a tough decision, but it has never been my intention to shirk the tough decisions.

"I am also delighted to announce that the wrapping, including the ribbon and the brightly coloured foil, remains firmly in place. And by preserving the basic structures of this egg, I have, I believe laid the foundations for a very happy Easter by putting the priorities of my partner first."

My partner exits in a huff – proof positive, I'm afraid, that she is the guilty party. It has always been my full intention to stand by her, and I shall continue so to do, up until that point at which her position becomes untenable.

As told to
CRAIG BROWN

Celeb

LIGGER

SO, GARY, YOU'VE HAD A LONG AND ILLUSTRIOUS CAREER AS A ROCK STAR AND PERFORMER...
THANKS VERY MUCH.
YOU'VE RELEASED COUNTLESS ALBUMS, SOLD GOD KNOWS HOW MANY CONCERT TICKETS, YOU HAVE YOUR OWN WEBSITE, MERCHANDISING COMPANY AND CREDIT CARD..
THAT'S RIGHT...
DO YOU EVER WORRY THAT YOU'RE NOW JUST A PRODUCT?
A PRODUCT? ME? THAT'S INSULTING...
I'M A BRAND, MATE... ASK MY MARKETING PEOPLE.
OH RIGHT.

Literary Review

Factory flaw

24 Hour Party People
Tony Wilson
(Channel 4 Books, £9.99)

THERE'S no doubt the posters are intriguing: they show the face of a man with a curtain fringe and the word "twat". They are advertising director Michael Winterbottom's film *24 Hour Party People*, and the "twat" in question is Tony Wilson, co-founder of Factory Records. Wilson, the central character of the film, also happens to be the author of this eponymous book. Confused? You will be if you try reading it.

The myth surrounding Wilson has acquired several layers of irony of late (there are other film posters saying "genius"); but the story beneath the froth is an undeniably brilliant one and more than worthy of a feature film. It has soaring genius, crushing ineptitude, lashings of hubris and a ready-made soundtrack.

There's the suicide of Joy Division's Ian Curtis; the prolonged attempted suicide of Happy Mondays' Shaun Ryder, plus countless pills, thrills and bellyaches at Manchester's ill-fated Haçienda club. Anyone who likes any popular music at all will go mushy at the thought of tattered *NME*s and a chance to relive the glory days when the lumbering dinosaur of prog rock finally keeled over; when fighting gave way to dancing; when ecstasy made the world a better place... for several hours.

So, if you want the story in glorious technicolor, you'll watch Winterbottom's movie. Or if you are fascinated by the minutiae, the stats behind the anecdotes, you'll already own music journo Mick Middles' *From Joy Division to New Order: The True Story of Anthony H Wilson and Factory Records*. If, however, you're champing at the bit to hear from Anthony H. Wilson himself — genius or twat, visionary or huckster? – you'll be gagging to read the book. And here you'll be sorely disappointed.

Before you have even made it to the foreword, it will become apparent that something is amiss. Although subtitled *What the Sleeve Notes Never Tell You*, those expecting a jaw-dropping confessional will find there are several things the dust-jacket never tells you either. The smallprint copyright blurb is more helpful: "This is in part a work of fiction. Most of the people in this book exist, but some of the events and conversations are fictitious." So is this a novel dressed as an autobiography or the other way round?

As Tony soon explains, *24 Hour Party People* is actually a "novelisation" of a film script, which just happens to have as its main character himself. Even for a man as adept at self-marketing as Wilson, getting paid to pen his own fiction is a masterstroke. The book is written in the pally tones of celeb autobiography, allowing him to settle old scores, airbrush inconvenient figures from the sleeve notes and generally present himself both as pop culture's prophet and messiah. By being neither entirely true nor wholly false, Wilson has every base covered: historians and libel lawyers may judge him not because there was every chance he's just kidding.

Peddling himself as PT Barnum meets FR Leavis ("What is rhyme, what does it do and not do. . .") with two-fingers to the facts and the odd gnomic flurry serves Wilson very well thank you. But it renders *24 Hour Party People* rather useless for everyone else — neither a true story nor a new story.

Some of the anecdotes, of course, are great: but for the ones we hadn't heard, are they reliable? It's widely known that New Order's *Blue Monday*, the biggest-selling 12-inch of all time, came with so much packaging it lost 2.5p on every copy, and as such was a hugely successful financial disaster. But what of the rather charming tale of how Wilson over-ordered another New Order 12-inch, 80,000 copies of which toppled over in a Stockport storage shed and flattened an old couple's caravan? Great anecdote, crazy times. But when tainted with the whiff of fabrication, pointless.

Unsurprisingly this bewildering insistence on bendy talk soon turns into simple disdain for the task at hand, and particularly for us block-headed readers. Wilson begins his novelisation by informing us that "novelisation is the lowest form of art". Two pages into a semi-fiction this is not very encouraging. His refrain throughout – joking, presumably – is "you should probably read more", generally inserted after a quotation from "the sublimely quotable Jimmy Joyce" that explains why the Happy Mondays' Bez is TS Eliot. It's Joyce who provides his "favourite quote ever". It obviously means a lot to him as he misquotes it hideously as the "inexorable modality of life".

It gets worse. By page 147 Wilson refers to Joy Division's "Isolation" from the album *Closer* and adds "Sorry to make you play the records again, although if this book has any other point it eludes me." Me too. Play the records again, see the film, but let Tony have it his way and avoid reading this self-defeating charade.

The word on the street

Kelly + Victor
Niall Griffiths
(Jonathan Cape, £10)

OH WELL, here goes:

Oh good fuck there's Kelly waving at me. She's walkin towards me across St George's Gardens with a grin so big I can see it from here an she's waving at me. Wearin a grey hoody an a long denim skirt frayed at the hem an Adidas trainies an looking absolutely fuckin wonderful... Aw Jesus Christ, this is the fuckin one, man, this is it she's it this is all entirely the fuckin one. What I've been waitin for so fuckin long it hurts to remember. Since the day I was born and took me first friggin breath. . .

In case you hadn't heard, Niall Griffiths, the author of the foregoing paragraph, is being widely touted as the Next Big Thing. *Grits*, his first novel (alternative lifestyles in Aberystwyth, etc) is being filmed for TV. *Sheepshagger*, its successor, according to the Guardian, offers "a modern sensibility informed by Greek tragedy and the Blakean sublime" (that's right, entirely the fuckin one). That redoubtable critic Mr Irvine Welsh has identified a spirit which "challenges and reaffirms the power of the novel" and the arts section profile writers are already having an altogether splendid time.

Mr Griffiths is in his mid-30s and hails from Liverpool (a name-check for Gerard Houllier, the 'Pool manager in the acknowledgments, natch). Kelly + Victor opens in that city shortly after its millennium party with the male lead, Victor, out of his head on drugs and sauce, bumping into the female lead, Kelly, out of her head on ditto, and heading back to her place for the shag to end all shags. Reconvening for a second encounter, after Victor has returned from a New Year excursion to North Wales with his mates, it all gets a bit out of hand.

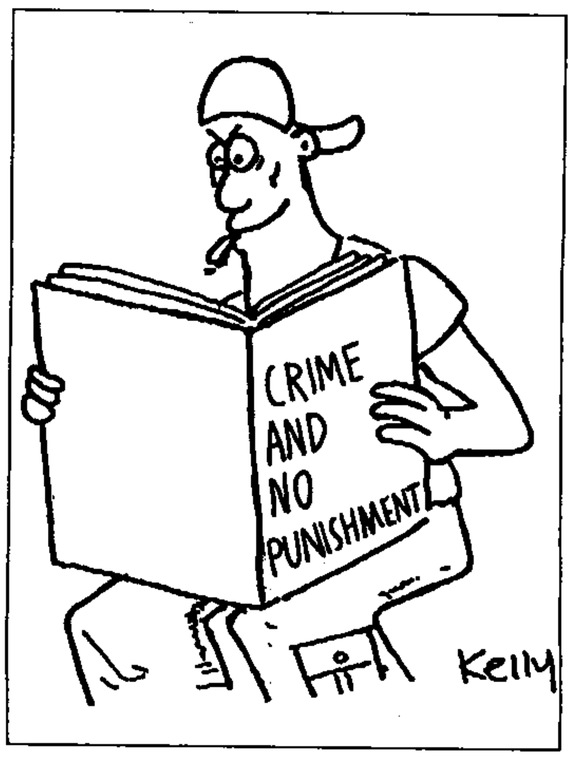
In fact our man ends up pinned to the mattress while his lady-love carves their names into his back with a razor and then rams her fist up his... but no, this is a family newspaper. Come the third bout, abstinence having overcome the timorous Victor's inhibitions, well, let's just say that there's a bit of a mess.

Leaving aside its subject matter, Kelly + Victor is essentially an attempt to bring off that most difficult and dangerous fictional trick: the fabrication of an urban demotic style. That is, to create a stream of consciousness capable of reproducing the (faked) thoughts of some Liverpool scally (two Liverpool scallies, actually, as the book's second half has the lady-love contributing her side of the story) permanently out of his face on lager and cocaine cut with soap powder. It doesn't work, of course, although not for want of trying.

Sure, Griffiths can do the Viz-style dialogue — and, oddly, some of the exchanges between Victor and his dominatrix ("I'd do fuckin anything for you, Kelly", "I know yer would, Victor") sound uncannily like Viz's serial inebriate "Eight Ace" – but, clearly, he's a clever bloke who's read some books and has some idea of a shapely sentence. Every so often, fer fuck's sake, it shows.

Here we are, for example, on page 83 with our star-crossed lovers, pissed and randy, going home in a taxi, and suddenly Kelly is "whisperin things in me ear too low for me to properly discern." Too low for me to properly what, our Victor? Shortly before this, our boy can hear his ears ringing in "the unaccustomed silence". In the what? I mean, who is this, Anita fuckin Brookner or someone? Then there is an hilarious moment in the Welsh countryside, when Victor reflects on the desirability of enticing his squeeze out into this bucolic paradise. "There was a certain natural loveliness that could only ever be enhanced by you, a mountain range in miniature in your shape only, a vastness and an edge-of-the-worldness that I think has both its beginning and end in you." He quickly recovers himself ("In yer face. In yer words. . . Yer fuckin gorgeous", etc) but the damage is done. I mean, make up yer fuckin mind Victor, son, are yer a workin class novelist or are yer not?

In fact fragments of Griffiths' inherently bourgeois vocabulary and sensibilities lie everywhere about: references to people being "centred", or of "mixed race" and so on. The two page description of Victor making a cup of tea ("The perforations in the bag like pores in skin", etc) deserves the kind of extended quotation that our editorial constraints do not, alas, allow. Hubert Selby jr (*Last Exit to Brooklyn*) and various modern Americans can keep up this kind of impersonation for pages on end. Griffiths, sadly, is not quite in the same league. Never mind, audience appreciation is all, and if this isn't on the autumn Booker shortlist (Lisa Jardine, one imagines, will just love it) then the bevvies and the charlie are on me, pal, knowwharramean?



Rubbish tips

Dead on Time: How and Why Barry George executed Jill Dando

John McVicar
(Blake, £14.99)

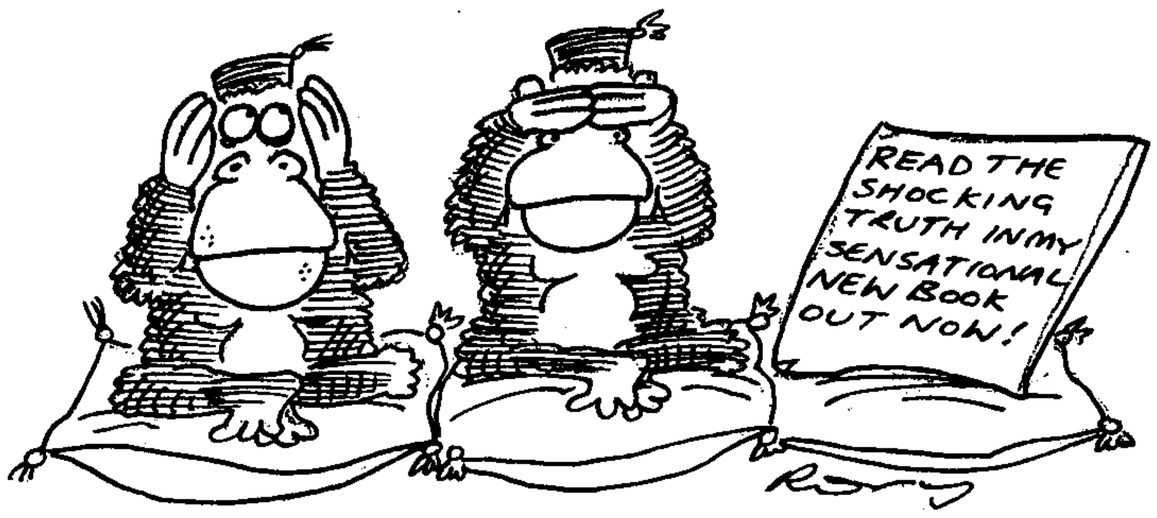
HOLMES and Watson, Blake and Tinker, Morse and Lewis — and now McVicar and Pell. Yes *Benjamin* Pell, for although this book carries only the ex-con's byline, the Dando mystery would never have been "solved" without the unique insights of Benjie the Binman.

Benjie's eureka moment came when a witness at Barry George's trial recalled the defendant pointing towards the sun and saying "Look up to the sky." Only Benjie spotted that George didn't say "*at* the sky" as most of us would, but "*to* the sky". You don't get it? "Look up to the skies" is a line from "Bohemian Rhapsody", which is by Freddie Mercury, whose real name was Bulsara, which was the name George adopted when he pretended to be Freddie's cousin. See?

And when the witness did look up at the sun and said he saw the colour yellow, George was delighted. Yellow was Freddie's favourite colour! From there it was easy. "La Japonaise" is a Mercury album; George married a Japanese woman. "April Lady' is a Queen song; Dando was killed in April. Mercury's "The Hitman" contains the line "I'm a head shredder", and where was Dando shot?

McVicar fills the gaps. Why did the gunman turn left as he fled? He was heading for the park, where he had hidden a change of clothing – including a *yellow* T-shirt — as part of his false-alibi plan. (What if he had simply parked his car down that way? No, George can't drive, dummy.) The failure of police searchers to find the T-shirt in George's flat shows he deliberately destroyed it to cover his tracks. (That the search came a whole year later could have no relevance.) And so on.

The last piece falls into place when, on the phone to Los Angeles, McVicar tells a Ninjutsu expert (George owned Ninjutsu books) about marks on the cartridge case found by Dando's body. These were ragged dents around the mouth of the case, of a kind usually left by a procedure to tighten the grip on the bullet. How many marks were there, asks the martial arts man. Six, replies McVicar. In a circle? In a circle. "Exactly the Ninjutsu symbol!" As Freddie himself might have said: "It's a kind of magic."



Books & Bookmen

■ WHILE Caradoc King's decision to hawk the new Graham Swift and his entire back catalogue around to the highest bidder rather than sticking with his current publisher Picador is distasteful, let's not kid ourselves that Picador isn't averse to a bit of poaching.

Last week came the announcement that Peter Straus has nabbed the best-selling Scott Turow from Penguin for his next novel, *Reversible Errors*, Turow making the same switch that Swift once did. Turow's agent Bill Hamilton of A.M. Heath told the trade press the move had occurred "with regret, but also great pleasure". Stand by for more musical chairs, spiralling advances and agents professing to be upset at the whole vulgar spectacle… while counting their 15 percent.

■ IN June Virgin Books will bring out an updated edition of Sir Richard Branson's autobiography, *Losing My Virginity*. As with so many Branson business decisions, the logic behind this act of vanity publishing needs to be challenged.

Does anyone want to buy this book? Unlikely. When the first edition appeared in 1998, it was remaindered with alarming speed. The shelves of second-hand bookshops also groaned under the weight of free copies given to Branson employees as Christmas presents (see *Eye* 968). The paperback didn't set the world on fire either.

Still, we are promised that the new edition will be "candid" and cover "dramatic events such as his Atlantic crossings, the sale of Virgin Records and the BA dirty tricks affair", as well as "insights into the workings of Virgin" and details of various developments at Virgin over the last five years.

If Beardie is honest, these will include the inside stories of the massive losses at his floundering V2 record label and the sale of 49 percent of Virgin Atlantic Airlines to Singapore Airlines to pay debts incurred by the rest of his profitless group. Not to mention why he failed to win the lottery franchise, the offloading of the Virgin-branded retail, cinema and financial product companies, or the panic decision to put the rest of the airline with Lloyds TSB to prop up the ailing empire.

On past evidence, however, if these humiliations are mentioned it will be done in a way that presents Branson in the best possible light. So much for candour.

■ IT SEEMS *Bernie's Game* (see *Eyes passim*), former tabloid hack Terry Lovell's book about Formula 1 chief Bernie Ecclestone, has been cancelled again, perhaps for the last time.

Originally commissioned by Alan Samson at Little, Brown, the book was set to appear in 1999; but after numerous legal threats from Ecclestone and countless reschedulings, Samson decided it wasn't worth it and let the rights revert to Lovell.

It then passed to Vision Paperbacks, a small outfit specialising in hard-edged topical non-fiction, which was set to publish this month. Now, though, even it has had enough.

Considering the manuscript has been thoroughly vetted by each publisher's lawyers, surely there should be no problem with publication? Not so. The willingness of tycoons to make life hell for anyone attempting to write books about them should not be underestimated. Numerous piffling legal points – mostly red herrings – have been raised at strategic points to delay publication.

Publishers, especially those as small as Vision, can't really be blamed for thinking their time might be spent more profitably on the rest of their list rather than fighting off pointless legal fusillades. Let's hope Lovell finds a publisher with limitless patience and the hide of a rhino.

'Bookworm'

Pseuds Corner

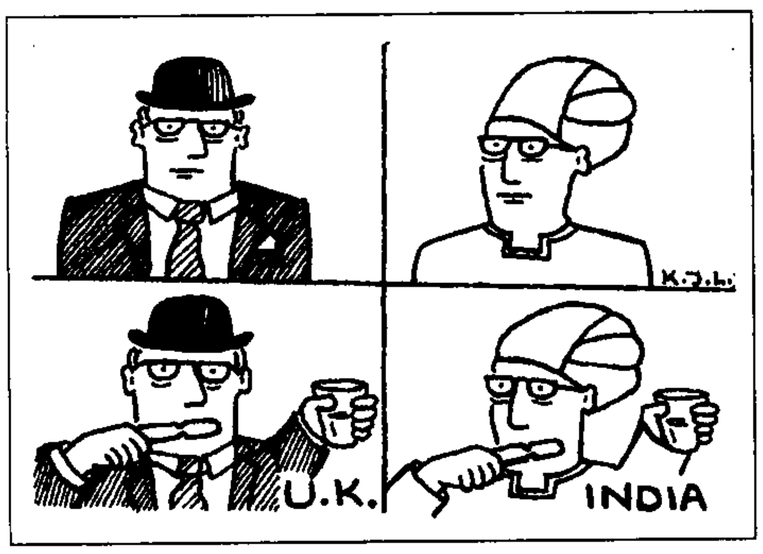
Exploring the linguistic concepts of markedness and prototypicality as viable mechanisms for mediating salient oppositions in Stravinsky's music. Inquiring beyond syntactic subversion to reveal the semiotic sign-scape governing his musical narrative. Theoretical basis in semiotic, implication-realisation and literary theory.

Music lecturer N. Mackay describes his research on the Sussex University website

On every piece, the choir [the Schola Cantorum of Oxford] wrote its autograph. A meticulous and ever over-weighty touch, the disposition of the singers and the crystalline acoustics of the Keble College Chapel space suffused, exquisitely, the boundaries between the parts. All came bathed in water-colour light: unearthly in effect, but sacrificing nothing of the clarity of individual lines, their unanimity of tone and force. It meant the stacked-up chord progressions of the Walton *Coronation Te Deum*, almost matched by those in Poulenc's *Quatre Motets* benefited just as much from niceties of separated tone as Tallis's *Salvator mundi* or the Tomkins piece *When David Heard*. In both of these, of course, despite so little melismatic fun, the counterpoint is structural, and must be heard.

Throughout, the choir flexed its muscle with well-nigh flagrant ease…*(continues)*

DEREK JOLE
Oxford Times



CHANGING HABITS: THE TECHNOLOGY AND PRACTICE OF TOOTH BRUSHING IN INDIA AND THE UK

Studentship job vacancy advertised by the University of Lancaster's Department of Sociology

The other week I drank milk for the first time in two years. I hadn't intended to. I thought the glass that one of my daughters had at the table contained horchata, an originally Valencian drink based on chufa, the tuberous roots of a kind of sedge. It is not overdoing it to say that one sip of milk prompted a certain revulsion.

JONATHAN MEADES
Independent on Sunday

…It can't be done, there is no way a film can be made that gets across the sound, the suicide, the intoxication, the drama, the merchandise, the obscenity, the stress, the rain, the ego, the trousers, the designs, the lust, the landscape, the business, the silliness, the gossip, the catalogue numbers, the art, the dancing, the dawn, the drinks, the heat, the building, the mayhem, the murder, the haunting…the fucking philosophy, the doomed heroes and the final beauty. You can't make a film about a geographical location, a chunk of the planet, a space called 'Manchester' that was all in the mind.

PAUL MORLEY
a fragment of the press release for *24 Hour Party People*

Pseuds Corporate

Unlike pure consultancies, we provide a broad range of services and are better positioned to deliver large, multiyear business transformation outsourcing solutions.

From the Accenture annual report

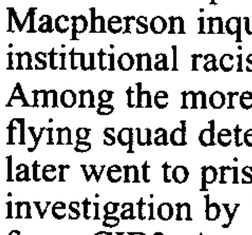
CONTRIBUTORS: Peter Owen, Charl Engela, Anon, Catherine Feeny, 'HD', Rupert Candy.

£10 paid for all entries

IN THE BACK

POLICE 5

MOORE THE MERRIER



WHO will succeed Commander Brian Paddick, relieved of his senior post in south London following mild (and handsomely-rewarded) allegations made against him in the *Mail on Sunday* by a former boyfriend? In the running for the succession is Det Chief Supt Brian Moore, whom *Eye* readers may well recall.

Mr Moore featured in a short item in June 2000 (1004) about the formation by police officers of a football team and drinking club called the Walthamstow Overseas Geographical Society, known more conveniently by the amusing acronym of WOGS. Among the players photographed in a jovial team picture was Brian Moore.

WOGS was formed in the late 1980s and lasted well into the 1990ss, at least until the murder of Stephen Lawrence and the subsequent Macpherson inquiry that so firmly discouraged institutional racism in the Metropolitan police. Among the more enthusiastic WOGS players was flying squad detective Terry McGuinness, who later went to prison for nine years after an investigation by Scotland Yard's anti-corruption force CIB3. A prominent member of CIB3 at the time was Det Supt Moore. Whether a former team player for WOGS has the right kind of record for senior policing in Brixton has yet to be decided.

Mr Moore also appeared in Eye 1042 in November last year when it was noted that he had been put in charge of two sensitive cases: that of Ira Thomas, convicted of causing grievous bodily harm in 1990; and that of Barry George, convicted in 2001 for the murder of Jill Dando. Mr Thomas's conviction was quashed in 1992 after the appeal court described the forensic and identification evidence against him as "wholly unavailing". Barry George was convicted last year and is appealing, citing the Thomas case.

Another likely runner for Mr Paddick's job cannot really take part in the race. He is Det Chief Supt Chris Jarratt, until recently head of the Met's serious crime group in south London. In the week that Met commissioner Sir John Stevens railed against defence lawyers as one of the chief obstacles to crime fighting, chief crime-buster Jarratt was, like Mr Paddick, "sent home" after allegations of a different nature to those made against Mr Paddick.

Mr Jarratt has not been suspended so will be able to give evidence in any case brought by CIB3, of which, like Mr Moore, he was a member.

PS: A WOGS reunion was held last month in a pub in Charing Cross.

PPS: Greater Manchester Police have announced a new chief constable. He is assistant commissioner at the Met, Mike Todd. *Eye* readers will recall Mr Todd's emotional outburst on BBC's *Newsnight* after three of his commanders had found sergeant Gurpal Virdi guilty of sending out racist mail from Ealing police station. Mr Todd's lurid description of Mr Virdi as "despicable" is said to have contributed healthily to the compensation eventually paid by the Met (taxpayer) to Mr Virdi when he was finally cleared of any connection to the racist mail, for which no one has yet been held responsible.

MILKING THE SYSTEM

WHAT are the facts about Labour peer Lord Ahmed and Nestlé, the multinational milk company? He is not impressed by criticism of the company that comes, he says, "mainly from white people".

That is emphatically not the view of Syed Aamar Raza, who is not white and is a former employee of Nestlé in Pakistan. Raza's evidence is set out in *Milking Profits*, a report published by the Network, a Pakistani organisation affiliated to the Cambridge-based campaign group, Baby Milk Action. Raza alleges that Nestlé repeatedly broke the World Health Organisation code by actively promoting bottle feeding as an alternative to breast milk, despite the fact that in countries like Pakistan water supplies are often polluted and can cause life-threatening diarrhoea.

Raza accuses the company of linking employees' bonuses to sales of infant formula, giving gifts to doctors and making direct contact with mothers at baby shows, all of which are banned by the code. Raza first experienced serious doubts when a doctor on his circuit who failed to save a baby dying from diarrhoea told him that the child had died as "the result of marketing by people like you". He resigned and issued a legal notice calling on Nestlé to stop breaking the code.

After Raza issued the notice, he claims, his group manager threatened to have him killed and his family kidnapped unless he stopped his action. After helping to compile *Milking Profits*, Raza came to Europe to promote the report. On 28 February 2000 he and representatives of Baby Milk Action met Lord Ahmed at the House of Lords where the peer appeared to support their campaign, and on 29 February Raza gave a presentation to a public meeting arranged by Labour MP Neil Gerrard.

Two days earlier shots had been fired at Raza's home in Sialkot, Pakistan; but when Baby Milk Action asked Nestlé to condemn the attack, the company issued a statement claiming it had never happened. Raza has been in hiding ever since and has not seen his wife or two young children for more than two years.

Lord Ahmed: the milk man cometh

By the end of 2000 Lord Ahmed was clearly siding with Nestlé. He offered to put the company's case at a European parliament hearing in November 2000 and wrote to MEPs in the multinational's defence. In a letter to Lord Ahmed in January 2001, Mr Raza expressed his disappointment that Lord Ahmed had failed to contact either him or Baby Milk Action before visiting Nestlé's operations in Pakistan.

Nestlé responded to Raza's allegations by commissioning an external report. The report found that in general Nestlé adhered to the spirit of the WHO code. Nestlé rejoiced, but somehow forgot to mention the report's proviso: "This study does not represent an attempt to investigate any of the allegations made, either by the Network or by Mr Raza. Whilst we were aware of, and took into account the allegations that have been made, we have neither tried to prove or to refute them."

Nestlé has accused Raza of trying to blackmail the company in return for dropping his allegations, and in an interview on the BBC Asian Network last month Lord Ahmed said that he has had access to a tape backing up the allegation. Despite repeated requests, Nestlé has refused to release the tape. Lord Ahmed meanwhile says he may join Nestlé as an adviser on international affairs.

STRAW DOGS OF WAR

FOREIGN secretary Jack Straw's recent green paper eulogising mercenaries argued that private soldiers are now acceptable because the old-style outfits employing dangerous dogs of war have been replaced by modern military PLCs with offices full of men in suits. They can be trusted to work for government, he says.

DynCorp is a case in point, according to Straw. The company is mentioned eight times in his green paper. He distinguishes it from what he calls "mercenaries of the rather unsavoury kind", by saying it is part of a "a corporate sector providing military services [which] is relatively new".

Straw believes "reputable" mercenaries can be used by Britain "as a cost effective way of procuring services" or by weak states that "need outside help to maintain security at home". The paper suggests repeatedly that modern mercenary corporations will behave well because they need a good reputation to stay in business. Hm.

DynCorp's mercenary business is run through its UK subsidiary, DynCorp Aerospace, registered in Salisbury and operating from Aldershot. DynCorp pays very little tax in the UK, only registering £343,915 profit and £141,220 tax on its £52m business. The American government hired the company to supply officers for the international police force in Bosnia and Kosovo. Straw highlights this and suggests the UN should follow suit. Mercenaries, he hopes, might be able to supply international peacekeepers on the cheap (£36m goes through Dyncorp's Aldershot subsidiary from Bosnian operations).

The firm's "additional services" might be less welcome, however. DynCorp faces persistent allegations about its involvement in sex trafficking in the Balkans. One American police officer, Kathryn Bolkovac, claims she was sacked by DynCorp because she investigated prostitution in Bosnia. Because Bolkovac worked for the firm's Aldershot subsidiary, she is suing the firm in the Portsmouth employment tribunal. She claims DynCorp officers forged documents for trafficked women, helped transport them illegally through border checkpoints and tipped off sex club owners about raids. One police officer hired by DynCorp apparently bought a woman for $1000.

In the US, meanwhile, DynCorp mechanic Ben Johnston has launched an anti-racketeering lawsuit against the company. He alleges he was sacked after uncovering DynCorp staff buying underaged girls for sex and selling guns. When DynCorp bosses would not investigate, he called in the US army criminal investigation command. Undercover army agents bought weapons and a pornographic video featuring a DynCorp supervisor from the firm's staff.

Straw argues that "the fact that a force is private or foreign does not prevent it from being under the control of the state". But this was not borne out when the newspaper *El Espectador* tried to investigate DynCorp's role in Colombia.

DynCorp is ostensibly involved there only in drug eradication, spraying Monsanto weed-killer on to Coca leaf crops. But it repeatedly stages fire fights with Colombia's FARC guerrillas, and in January five Colombian police were killed guarding a DynCorp helicopter that had been shot down by the FARC. Last year, a battle between DynCorp troops and FARC guerrillas showed that DynCorp men pilot helicopter gunships and carry M-16 rifles. At least three DynCorp pilots have been killed in Colombia. When *El Espectador* investigated, it found there was no contract between the Colombian authorities and DynCorp, only one between America and the Aldershot subsidiary. *El Espectador* found an ex-DynCorp pilot, Carl Weiss, who revealed "we never had to report to any Colombian authority". Instead he worked for a firm based in Britain paid for by the Americans. Even more bizarrely, he was initially hired by Manpower, the employment agency sponsoring the "Work Zone" in the dome!

Lockerbie: WHO PAID THE BOMBERS?

THE decision of five Scottish appeal judges in the Lockerbie case was entirely predictable. The five were exceedingly unlikely to overturn the absurd conclusions of three of their brethren, especially as there was no jury to blame.

The five decided simply that there was enough evidence to convict the one Libyan left in the frame, and proceeded to reject his lawyers' objections one by one at inordinate length. But if anyone really believes the conviction of Abdul Ali Basset Ali Megrahi is justified, they should read the *Eye* pamphlet of nearly a year ago (it is still available).

The judges' decision, however, is not the end of the Lockerbie story. It will be subject to continual challenges and disclosures. Among these in recent weeks has been the publication of *See No Evil, the True Story of a Ground Soldier In The CIA's War Against Terrorism*. The book is introduced in a foreword by the US investigative journalist Seymour Hersh, who describes it as "the story of one man's disillusionment and anger at an agency we've come to rely upon".

That man is Robert Baer, a former CIA expert in the Middle East, who confesses "few things have left me more frustrated than the Pan-am investigation". He then outlines the early view of the CIA that the Lockerbie bombing was the work of a

terrorist group — the PFLP-GC — recruited by Iran to avenge the shooting down of an Iranian airbus in the Gulf in July 1988, five months before Lockerbie.

Mr Baer concentrates on one of the PFLP-GC's leaders, Muhammed Hafiz Dalqamuni (sometimes spelt Dalkamoni). The terrorist was in a German prison, facing terrorist charges, at the time of the Lockerbie bombing. Mr Baer suspects that "the operation was handed over to one of his cell's members". He goes on:

"On December 23 1988, two days after the bombing, an $11m transfer showed up in a General Command bank account in Lausanne, Switzerland. It moved from there to another General Command account at the Banque Nationale de Paris, and then to yet another at the Hungarian Trade Development Bank. The Paris account number was found in Dalqamuni's possession upon arrest. What's more, Mohammed Abu Talib, one of Dalqamuni's associates suspected of having a role in the bombing, received a payment of $500,000 on April 25, 1989. Did that and the other payments originate in Iran? Were they success fees for Pan Am 103? Certainly none of these are illogical conclusions."

Mohammed Abu Talib will be known to Eye readers as Mohammed Abu Talb, one of the first suspects for the Lockerbie bombing. Indeed, it was Talb's visits to Malta in the months and weeks before the bombing that established links between the PFLP suspects and Malta — links that ironically later helped to convict Megrahi. The suggestion that Talb had been handsomely paid by the Iranians so soon after the Lockerbie bombing had not been made before Mr Baer's book was published.

What happens now? The Libyan government still insists Megrahi is innocent – but it is prepared to pay "compensation" to the families of the Lockerbie dead if such payments buy them out of sanctions and into to the wealthy world of trade with America. In the meantime, will there be a full-scale independent inquiry into the bombing, a demand made consistently by the British families? Only if the government accedes to such a demand in the face of the most furious opposition from across the Atlantic.

STARK RAVING MoD?

FIRST came news that Britain's new Apache Longbow helicopter gunships can't fire their tank-busting rockets because they might destroy the entire aircraft. Now it seems the combat effectiveness of the Fleet Air Arm (FAA) could be jeopardised following the announcement by the ministry of defence (MoD) that Sea Harriers serving on the Royal Navy aircraft carriers Ark Royal, Invincible and Illustrious will be decommissioned in 2004.

The Sea Harrier, a robust fighter aircraft armed with powerful Blue Vixen radar and anti-aircraft missiles, is designed to protect naval vessels, other shipping and troops against attacks from hostile aircraft.

However, the MoD plans to incorporate the FAA's Sea Harriers with the Royal Air Force's GR-7 Harrier aircraft into a single force, known as "Joint Force Harrier" (JFH). And the GR-7s that will replace the Sea Harriers on aircraft carriers are essentially bombers: they're not designed to fight other aircraft, which can pose such a threat to shipping. The FAA will not get a new fighter until 2012, when the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) enters service. But there are already doubts in defence circles whether it will be able to engage other aircraft adequately.

Meanwhile the RAF is facing problems too. It may now have to wait for a replacement for its ageing Tornado F3 and Jaguar combat aircraft, following announcements that the Eurofighter Typhoon multirole fighter will not enter service until 2006.

The RAF could also face a crisis over its long-range transport aircraft. Britain has leased four C-17 Globemaster transport planes from Boeing for seven years. Some military sources believe this is already insufficient, but there are no plans for a replacement once the C-17s return to Boeing. The lack of large aircraft could restrict the UK's ability to rapidly deploy large numbers of troops and equipment to far-flung destinations. It could also have an adverse effect on plans to develop a European Rapid Reaction Force (RRF).

For now the RAF can make shorter-range deployments using its fleet of C-130J Hercules transport aircraft. The Hercules will eventually be replaced by the A-400M medium-range transport aircraft. But so far all that's been built of this plane is… a life-size, balsa wood model!

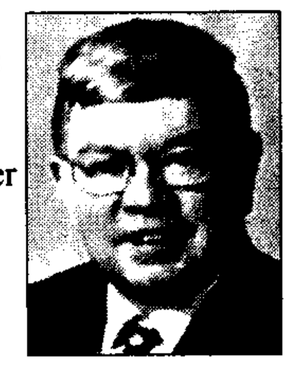
ONE FELL SWOOP

WHEN the tanker Sea Empress was grounded at Milford Haven in 1996, there was a bit of an outcry about port safety. Critics complained about the old pilotage act, which left all pilotage of ships in the hands of the harbour authority. One result of the outcry was a port marine safety code – a code that is being blatantly breached every day by the harbour authority on the Humber, the private company ABP, which owns 23 other ports in Britain.

As *Eye* readers will know, ABP sacked its 136 qualified pilots when they voted, almost unanimously, to strike in support of higher safety standards. When the pilots eventually agreed to call off their strike and tried to go back to work, ABP locked them out and banned them from the port.

The Labour government, in the shape of shipping minister David Jamieson, has sided resolutely with the employer. Asked what they are doing to safeguard their own port marine safety code, ministers reply pathetically that they will "monitor the situation closely to ensure that any action taken by ABP does not compromise safety". But there is a heap of evidence that ABP's new pilots are causing havoc on the Humber, and so far the government has done nothing about it.

Meanwhile, what is being done about training pilots for the future? Some time ago the government established a new body called British Ports Industries Training (BPIT). It organised conferences, published standards manuals and even persuaded some universities to accept syllabuses for degrees for qualified pilots. All this has now collapsed. The BPIT has disappeared, its former employees generously paid off. In its place is an entirely new body called Port Skills and Safety whose sense of purpose seems somewhat different. Its newly-appointed boss is Mike Fell (above), a director of… ABP Humber! Mr Fell will run the new body in his spare time while continuing his day job for ABP.



The full story can be read in a powerful editorial in *The Pilot* (editor, Port of London pilot, John Clandillon-Baker). He muses on the complete lack of national media interest in the chaos on the Humber. "Shipping," he concludes, "is only of interest if it is accompanied by images of oil-covered seagulls."

YEOH-HO-HO?

NOW that Enron has collapsed, people in the south west no longer have to rely on a dubious, foreign-based multinational to pollute their water and overcharge them for the privilege. Everything will be different now Wessex Water has been sold to YTL in Malaysia. Or will it?

YTL has a close relationship with Malaysia's premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who acts as a salesman for the firm. Francis Yeoh, who runs YTL, is one of Mahathir's closest allies. At one point Yeoh flew Luciano Pavarotti in to entertain private guests, including the opera-loving Dr Mahathir. Yeoh and YTL also staged a rerun of the "three tenors" concert with an Italian musical crew for guests, including Dr Mahathir, at the firm's 40th anniversary.

In 1992 YTL changed from being a simple construction firm to a power company thanks to a contract from the Malaysian government to supply electricity to the national grid.

YTL was, however, involved in a big power scandal in Zimbabwe. In 1997, after some close talks between president Robert Mugabe and Dr Mahathir, YTL was awarded a multi-million dollar contract to take over Zimbabwe's state-owned Hwange power plant, which supplies more than half Zimbabwe's electricity.

The board of the Zimbabwe Electrical Supply Authority, which ran the plant, complained about "lack of transparency" in the deal (Mugabe had arranged the takeover without competitive tendering, ignoring bids from five multinationals). Mugabe responded to the complaints by sacking the board.

When ambassadors from several nations complained, Mugabe told them to "go to hell". In the end, even the new board attacked the deal. The World Bank refused to renew loans for the huge power plant, and the YTL take-over stalled. Customers of Wessex Water may have better luck. Or not!

You can contact Paul Foot on 020 7287 3183 or the In the Back team on 020 7437 4017

In the City

FORMER Tory chancellor Lord Lamont faces potential embarrassment as a result of his directorship of Balli Group, the privately owned international steel trader. A criminal investigation has been launched in Germany into allegations that up to £100m is missing from a Balli associate.

The money is said to have been transferred from the leading German steel distributor Kloeckner, which the Iranian born, London based Alaghband family, which owns Balli, acquired last year. Kloeckner and Balli Group are controlled through a corporate structure that runs via Luxembourg and Switzerland to Liechtenstein.

The prosecutors' office in Frankfurt began an investigation in February into allegations that the money had been transferred from Kloeckner improperly. An internal investigation has been instituted at Kloeckner to explain what happened to the money – at least Euros 100-120m.

Balli in London has denied any wrongdoing stressing that Balli Group and Kloeckner were managed separately. However, two Balli directors – Hassan Alaghband and David Spriddell – were on the Kloeckner board. They have now resigned.

Balli is a major steel trader with a turnover in 2000 of almost $1.4bn and profits of $1.5m. It first acquired Kloeckner's steel trading interests in 2000 for some $13m and then last August acquired the German company's steel distribution operations in a deal worth £670m – around £200m excluding debt and pension liabilities.

In addition to being Europe's biggest independent steel distributor, Balli also has substantial interests in Rumania – like Labour donor Lakshmi Mittal.

Lamont has been a Balli Group non-executive director since 1996. Not long after he joined the board Vahid Alaghband, eldest of three brothers and the Balli chairman, became a British citizen. The family denies any interest in political influence in Britain. Lamont, they say, is known and respected in those countries where they do business. Presumably countries which do not recall how he so successfully managed sterling's unplanned and expensive exit from the ERM.

PERHAPS it is time the Department of Timidity & Inaction took an interest in clothing group Marchpole, owner of the Yves St Laurent licence for Britain, on behalf of those shareholders not connected with former chairman and still major shareholder, Michael Morris.

Last month saw the third board upheaval in less than three years, with the enforced departure of chief executive Adam Reynolds and chairman Tony Caplin and the resignation of brokers Seymour Pierce. Reynolds and Caplin had been appointed last year in a move to improve the debt-laden company's prospects. Their departure followed pressure from Morris and his supporters on the board.

Seymour Pierce resigned because they believed the other Marchpole directors, led by Ian Gray, were not acting independently or in the interests of all shareholders. The brokers were concerned about the leaking of confidential company information to Morris.

Morris controls 26 percent of Marchpole. His ally Harold Tillman – the only man to beat a boardroom disqualification rap from the DTI (not that that has deterred the DTI from trying for a second time) – speaks for another 10 percent. Assorted other Morris supporters could take his camp to close to 50 percent.

Morris was forced out of Marchpole as chief executive in February 2000 after allegations of fraud, making secret profits and breach of duty by his fellow directors. The independent directors claimed Morris had hidden an interest in two companies with which Marchpole traded and who owed the company substantial sums.

Marchpole claimed £570,000 from Morris plus damages. The Marchpole claim also included

demands for the repayment of some £62,000 of personal expenditure, including four-figure amounts for wine and caviar. Morris denied all the allegations and countersued. The case was settled in September last year. Details of the settlement were not disclosed.

In December Morris presented an invoice for £170,000 under a consultancy agreement with Marchpole. This was refused by Reynolds.

Morris then offered to sell his stake for 11.5p a share – well above the market price. He indicated that Tillman would also sell at that price. But a potential buyer of the Morris and Tillman stakes would need an exemption by the Takeover Panel from the rule that would have triggered a full bid.

No offer for his shares being received, Morris wrote demanding that Reynolds and Caplin resign – he had previously only demanded Reynolds' head – and threatening to call a shareholders' meeting to sack them.

The Morris pressure seems to have resulted in a further board split with certain of the directors deciding Reynolds had to go. Following the decision of Reynolds and Caplin to quit, Marchpole shares have now collapsed to 4p. This compares with the flotation price in 1997 of 110p.

The board now intends to move the company off into the shadows of the AIM market, where regulatory demands are much less. What YSL – which can cancel the licence in the event of a change of control – make of this over in France remains to be seen.

The DTI should start paying a little more attention as the supposed protector of shareholders' rights, especially in view of the reasons given by Seymour Pierce for their resignation.

GRAHAM Avery's efforts to revive the former Titaghur jute company – now called Azmara – have received two further setbacks. Three of the company's jute mills in Bengal have been sold at auction, although completion of the sale has been delayed by a legal challenge from Azmara. The proceeds will go to the employees' pension fund so there will be nothing for shareholders. And Azmara's debts to the pension fund have once again resulted in Avery's arrest on a visit to India. He was arrested early last month at Delhi airport as a result of the criminal complaints filed by the pension fund. Avery was released after lodging a personal bond.

BOXER Prince Naseem Hamed may have had to delay his ring comeback until May as a result of incurring an injury, but his risk of a battle with the taxman looks like it is ongoing.

The latest accounts for Naseem Hamed Enterprises reveal that the Inland Revenue had still not agreed the way in which payments for the TV rights in Yemen, the Hamed homeland, to the Prince's UK fights are not included in the NHE accounts. This matter is still a "fundamental uncertainty", says auditor Landin Wilcock.

Payment for Hamed's fights outside the UK are also not received by the British company which carried out a review of its tax affairs during 1999 and 2000, as detailed in the last *Eye*.

The NHE accounts to April 2001 show that he was paid only £98,000 as a director but received £400,000 as a dividend. The previous year there was no dividend but a £1.6m salary.

LORD Hanson seems to be keeping unusual company now that he has retired to his mansion in Palm Springs. The Hanson family interests have taken a stake in Ivanhoe Resources, a Singapore based, Vancouver listed mining group where son Robert has joined the board.

Ivanhoe is run by none other than Robert "Toxic Bob" Friedland, held responsible for one of the greatest ever pollution scandals in US mining history. Not only that, but Ivanhoe has been the target of criticism because of its cosying up to the military dictators of Burma.

Friedland was a major investor in Galactic Resources, owner of the Summitville gold mine in Colorado which will cost more than $200m and over 100 years to clean up its pollution of the Alamosa river after the company ceased operations. Friedland agreed last year to pay $28m over 10 years – one of the rare occasions in which an individual has been held responsible

THE DIRECTORS

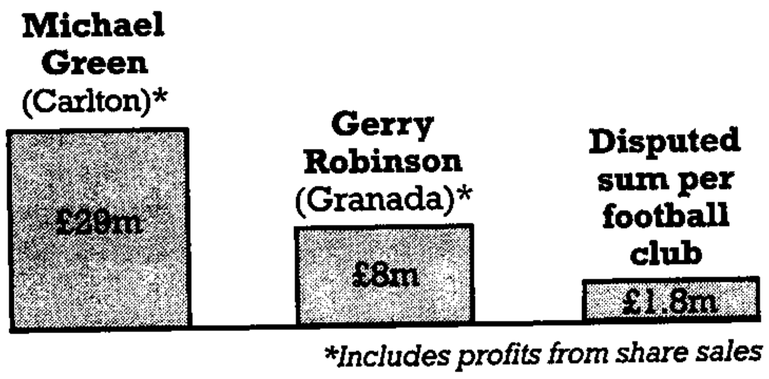
DREDGE/RIGG

CHECKED OUT THESE BROCHURES SIR JULIAN ?
108.
YOU BET! SOME GREAT DEALS THIS SEASON!
FINAL OFFER – I'LL TAKE THE 767's AND FOUR AIRBUSES IF YOU THROW IN THE JUMBO AS WELL...
EXECUTIVE FLIGHT MONTHLY

Stock Horror

Honouring contracts at ITV

Payouts since the Football League contract was signed...



**Includes profits from share sales*

for a corporate crime.

In Burma Ivanhoe has been kept busy denying allegations that it is using forced labour in a copper mine it operates there with the military regime as a partner. It has also popped up in Kazakhstan and China where the regimes are almost as democratic.

But then "Toxic Bob" has always been colourful. In 1971 he was jailed for selling LSD to undercover FBI agents – this conviction was later expunged. He moved on to become a penny share promoter on the Vancouver Stock Exchange before hitting it big in Labrador with the Voisey's Bay nickel mine.

Such a colourful background may not disturb Robert Hanson, no stranger to headlines about his private rather than his business life. But it may cause a few frowns in Palm Springs. Although as an arch-Thatcherite, Lord Hanson always did like right-wingers. But dopeheads?

'Slicker'

New Range of Talking Cards

EYE ON ICI

THE once mighty ICI, now fighting off "junk credit" status, is sacking staff and asking shareholders to cough up more money to pay off debt through a "rights issue". But nothing succeeds like failure; and outgoing chief executive Charles Miller Smith, the man arguably most responsible for the firm's misery, is set to be rewarded with new jobs and honours.

ICI's failure stems largely from Miller Smith's purchase of Unilever's old chemicals business in 1997 for $8bn.

Miller Smith was advised over the Unilever purchase by investment bank Goldman Sachs, whose John L. Thornton helped Miller Smith pick Unilever chemicals and put together the huge loan to help ICI buy it. *Business Week* said Miller Smith was a "loyal fan" of Thornton, and the feeling may well have been mutual: Goldman Sachs earned a reported $100m from ICI for the deal. Now Miller Smith is leaving ICI for a job advising... Goldman Sachs! Asked by the *Eye* if the new job was a reward for the fees in the fateful Unilever deal, a Goldman Sachs spokesperson exclaimed: "What a cynical perspective!"

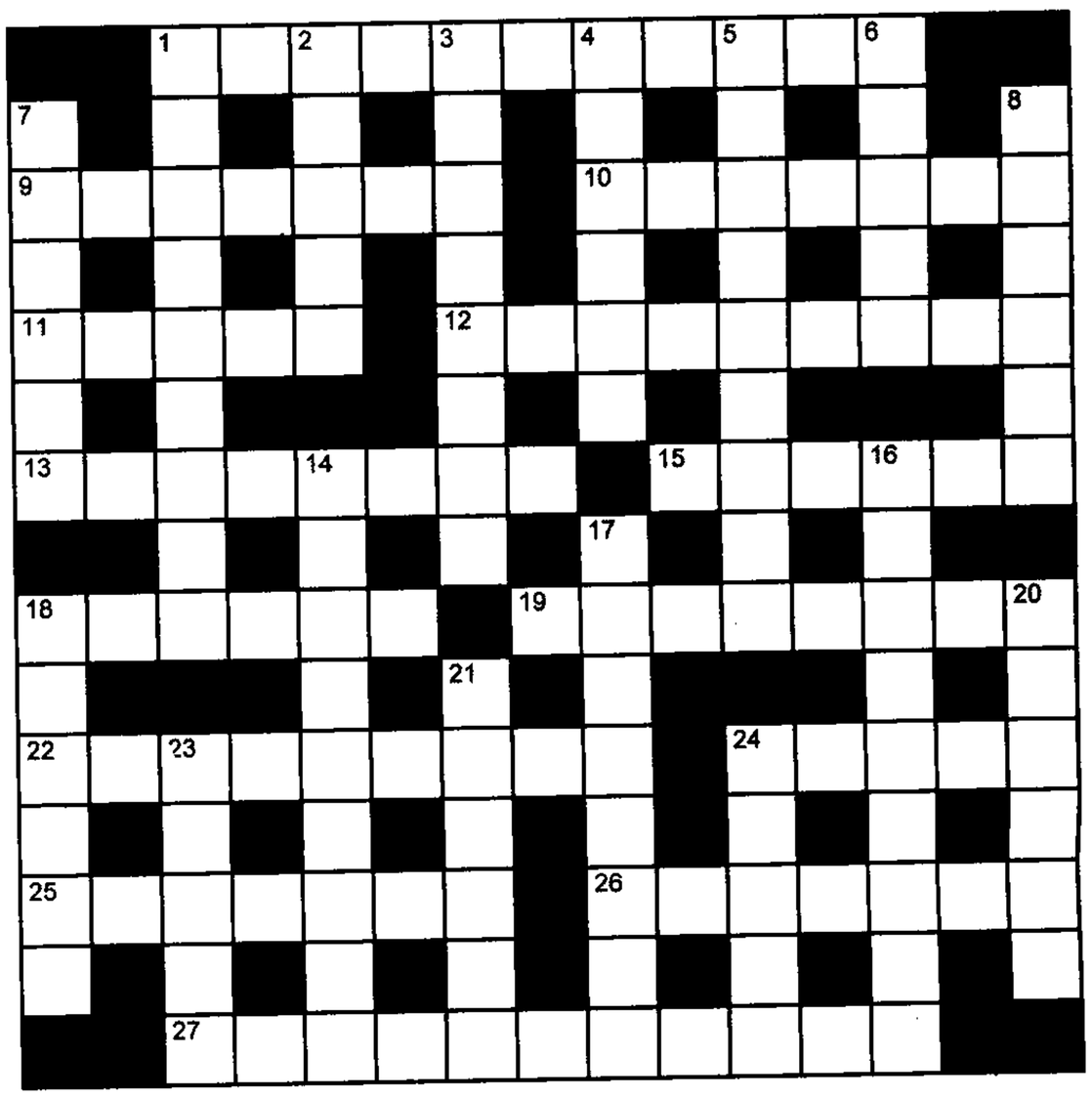
Miller Smith looks set to get even more from ICI's failure, however. He is now being sounded out for a knighthood for, incredibly, "services to the chemical industry" to be awarded in the next new year's honours. Just what services he performed are a mystery to the 2,700 workers whose jobs were cut and to the firm's angry shareholders.

EYE CROSSWORD 206

by Cyclops

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 12 April 2002.

Entries to 'Crossword', Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1D 3BN or via email to crossword@private-eye.co.uk



ACROSS

1/17 Brenda's with Roger for life possibly (3,8,8)
9 Thrash: one including wicked dance (7)
10 Artist freaked out, astride Brook (7)
11 Naff awards presenter's butt in shreds (5)
12 Mostly worried about nothing following business procedure to divert motions (9)
13 English lass getting screwed outside — assistance needed by suitor? (5,3)
15 Casual partner's tool getting erect ... (4-2)
18 ... is worth a great many tries to be refined (6)
19 Penny has vulgar organ that gurgles in the bath (8)
22 Fantastic shag, right in the city Hilton's paradise (7-2)
24 All right to interrupt workout with Bob's balls (5)
25 Excessive piss-taker inhabiting awful hole in the country (7)
26 Making out what this sort of discussion has come to mean (7)
27 Bottom's experience of being head over heels (4,4,3)

DOWN

1 Real beauty of a stink over bell-ringer (9)
2 Raises arses (5)
3 Disorderly Jeffrey has no hesitation getting into "I can" mode (8)
4 Peers' sort of sign (6)
5 Going through the motions as a lover? (9)
6 Short girl, very round, gets barrage of insults (5)
7 "Bang?" Lola scoffed, "hasn't got an earthly!" (6)
8 Description of content of smelly sock written down to ingratiate yourself (4,2)
14 Pissed Cyclops, on 'Wickets', makes a case of it (9)
16 Got out of bed with child (7,2)
17 See 1 Across
18 Menacing type of clue, mixed with s and m (6)
20 Being provocative, going topless and giving relief (6)
21 Performance with nothing to see, but he gets paid for doing it (6)
23 Muddled Labour's second seat lost (2,3)
24 Breathe heavily catching first sight of lacy gear (5)

Crossword 205 winner: MICHAEL O'BRIEN

Solution to Crossword 205

ACROSS: 8 Split 9 Tight arse 10 Refinery 11 Bluish 13 Gallstone 15 Token 16 Ostia 18 Railroads 20 Editor 21 Shanghai 24 Tosses off 25 Based.

DOWN: 2 Willful 3 Often 4 After hours 5 Digs 6 Mutilator 7 Lerwick 12 Delightful 14 Soap opera 17 Twin set 19 Aphasia 22 Noble 23 Coup.

Poser: "How do randy male elephants find female elephants in the long grass?" Ans. Delightful

Yabg
HUSBAND
What did you do last night?
Went to the pub and got pissed...
Went for a Vindaloo got in a fight
What you doin' tonight?
Same

Save money. Cut the cost of your life insurance - instantly!

If you have taken out a life insurance policy recently, or are considering one now, LifeSearch could save you money. We compare hundreds of quotes from leading companies and can almost certainly get you the same cover for considerably less.

£100,000 of Life Cover

Alliance & Leicester	£22.90
M & S	£15.25
Eagle Star Direct	£14.66
Abbey National Life	£14.42
Virgin	£12.00
LifeSearch	**£9.81**

Call LifeSearch direct on

0800 316 3166

Anytime 8am to 8pm weekdays
9am to 6pm weekends

Please quote reference PE 11

www.lifesearch.co.uk

*Life*SEARCH

We search. You save.

Premiums based on a monthly cost, with a leading insurer, for 25 year level term life cover for a non-smoking man aged 35 next birthday in normal health. Figures correct at March 2002.

DON'T BE A MUG

SAVE OVER £12 ON THE UK COVER PRICE

Subscribe to PRIVATE EYE

AND GET ONE FREE*

We are offering new subscribers the opportunity to obtain a 40TH ANNIVERSARY MUG

HURRY – ONLY AVAILABLE WHILE STOCKS LAST!

It's so easy to subscribe – just call us on 01454 642517 (or use the form below) giving us your credit card details (quote N10) and we'll do the rest.

ONLY £19** FOR 26 ISSUES

Please send the magazine to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Your daytime telephone number: _____

Email: _____
(in case we have a query with the order)

❑ UK £19.00** ❑ Europe & Eire £27.00 ❑ Rest of World £35.00
Overseas subscribers can also pay by International Money Order

❑ I enclose a Sterling cheque made payable to PRIVATE EYE or

❑ Please charge my MasterCard / VISA

Card number:

☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐

Expiry date: ☐☐ ☐☐

Signature _____

Send your application and payment details to:
PRIVATE EYE Subscriptions, Mortimer House,
230-236 Lavender Hill, London SW11 1LE.

Please allow up to three weeks for delivery of your first subscription issue and up to 28 days for delivery of the mug.

***OFFER APPLIES TO NEW SUBSCRIBERS ONLY**

The Open University

Two-year diplomas

Career and personal development for busy people

You can get a qualification from The Open University in just two years without the need to give up work or family commitments.

Choose from 32 diplomas in such areas as: *Computing, Arts, Economics, Environment, Geography, Health and Social Welfare, Information Technology, Management, Mathematics, Modern Languages, Music, Psychology, Science, Social Sciences.*

The Open University is the acknowledged expert in helping people study in their own time. We'll give you the support of a tutor for individual help and advice - a specialist in the subject you're studying. Many courses offer group tutorials and some have residential schools where you can meet other students. And we'll supply you with learning materials of the highest standard. The Open University leads the world in its use of new technology for learning. It's real value for money *and you can pay by instalments.*

Did you know?

- **70% of OU undergraduate students remain in full-time employment throughout their studies**
- **Over 30,000 employers have sponsored their staff on OU courses**
- **150,000 OU students are online from home**
- **Courses can be studied outside the UK**

†Accredited by The Association of MBAs.

☎ **Call the OU 24 hr Hotline quoting ref UGCACK 0870 9000 301**

Advisers available 8.30 - 5.00pm

www.open.ac.uk/brochure/

To: The Open University, PO Box 625, Milton Keynes MK7 6YG
Please send me the following prospectus(es):
☐ Undergraduate Courses and Qualifications (C0003)
☐ Higher Degrees (HD03) **Complete in BLOCK CAPITALS**

Title Initials Surname

Address

Postcode Date of Birth / /

Tel (Day/Evening)

Email Code: UGCACK

LIFE COVER

If you knew how much you're being overcharged for life cover, the SHOCK could kill you.

If you took out your life cover a while ago either to protect your mortgage or your family's lifestyle, you could be paying well over the odds.

But now that Direct Line provides life cover, you don't have to pay through the nose any more. In fact, in only 10 minutes, you could be enjoying the same protection you enjoy now, for a much smaller monthly cost*.

All it takes is one call – we'll even fill the forms in for you.

If you want life cover at a price that won't shock you, call Direct Line today.

DIRECT LINE®

0845 246 8271

call or buy online

directline.com

CALL LOCAL RATE 8am-8pm Mon-Fri. 9am-5pm Sat.

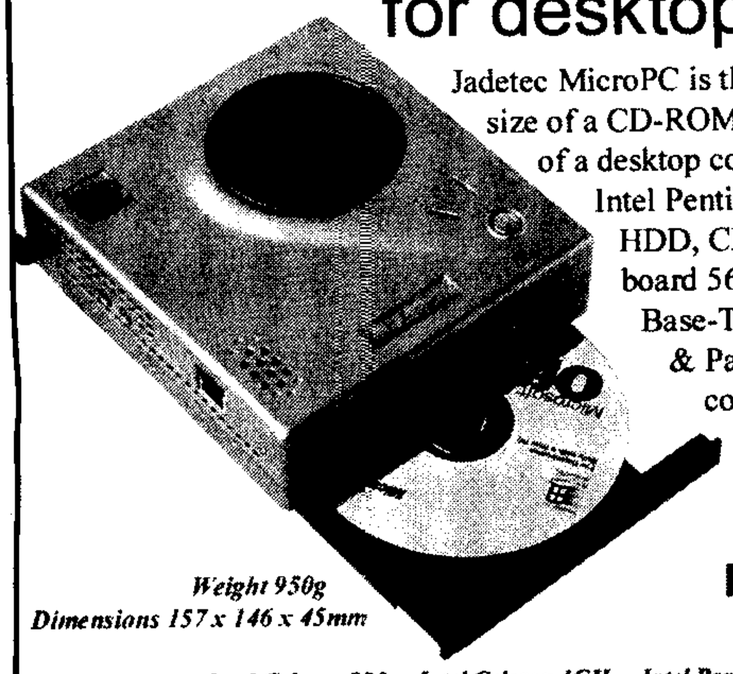
*Cover and premiums are subject to individual assessment. Direct Line Life Insurance Company Limited, 14-18 Cadogan Street, Glasgow G2 6QN. Telephone number 0845 3000 233. Registered in England No. 2199286. Registered Office: 3 Edridge Road, Croydon CR9 1AG. Direct Line Life Insurance Company Limited is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority. It markets only its own products and does not offer advice nor make recommendations about investments. For your added security all telephone calls are recorded. Direct Line and the telephone are trademarks used under licence.

Smallest PC in the world

www.jadetec.co.uk

Ultra-small **footprint**

for desktop **computing**



Jadetec MicroPC is the world's smallest PC, it's the size of a CD-ROM with full working functionality of a desktop computer. Specifications cater for Intel Pentium III CPU, 256 Mb, 30 Gb HDD, CD/DVD/CDRW. It features on-board 56k V90 Fax/Modem & 10/100 Base-T Ethernet, 2 USB Ports, Serial & Parallel connections and it's IrDA compliant. It's ready to run Windows 95/98/ME/2000/XP or Linux.

Weight 950g
Dimensions 157 x 146 x 45mm

pentium•!!!

Intel Celeron 900	*Intel Celeron 1GH*	*Intel Pentium III 1Ghz*	*Intel Pentium III 1Ghz*
64 MB DIMM	128MB DIMM	128MB DIMM	256MB DIMM
20GB HDD	20GB HDD	20GB HDD	30GB HDD
Win 98/ME	Win 98/ME/XP	Win 98/ME/XP	Win 2000/XP
CD-ROM	CD-ROM	CD-ROM	CD-ROM
£599+vat	**£699+vat**	**£799+vat**	**£899+vat**

Pocket-Sized Storage Solution

Just plug into any USB port and it will show up as another hard drive.

Pen Drive 64MB	£49
Pen Drive 128MB	£69
Pen Drive 256MB	£159
Pen Drive 512MB	£339
Pen Drive 1GB	£859

prices exc. vat

42" Plasma £3,795+vat

Jade tec

sales: 0113 281 7788
fax: 0870 138 4213
sales@jadetec.co.uk

www.jadetec.co.uk

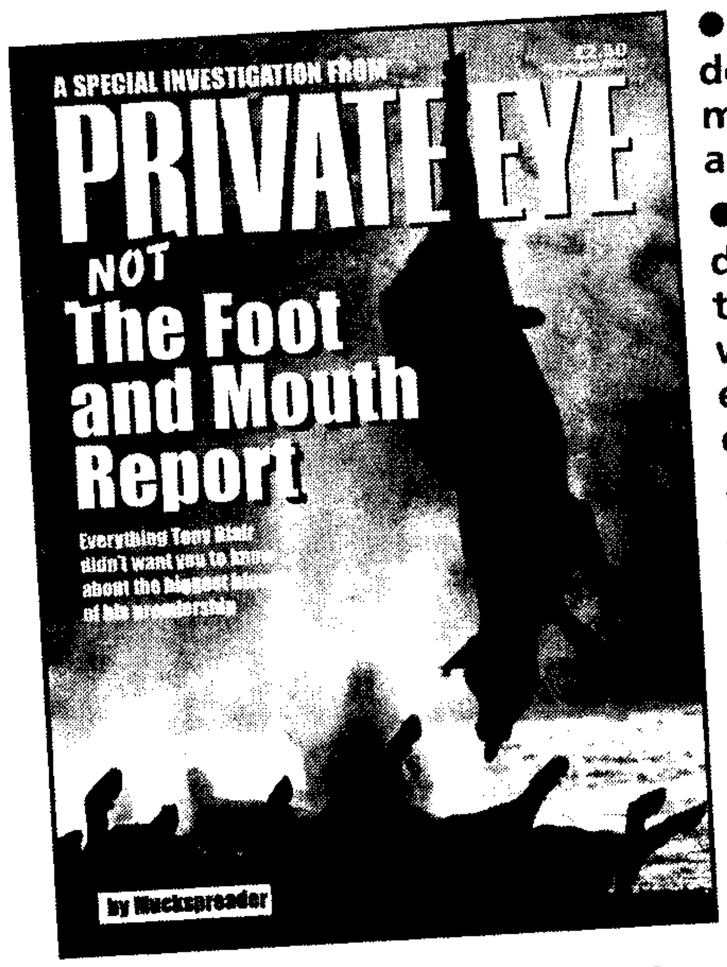
Prices exclude vat and carriage. Prices are subject to change without notice E&OE

TWO SPECIAL REPORTS

NOT THE FOOT AND MOUTH REPORT

Everything Tony Blair didn't want you to know about the biggest blunder of his premiership

REVEALED IN THIS REPORT – the inside story of how the Blair government's handling of this crisis became a chapter o maladminstration without parallel, involving:



- **the illegal destruction of millions of healthy animals**
- **handing over direction of strategy to scientists without any expertise in animal diseases**
- **lawbreaking by government officials on an unprecedented scale**
- **the massaging of official figures to support Tony Blair's election plans**

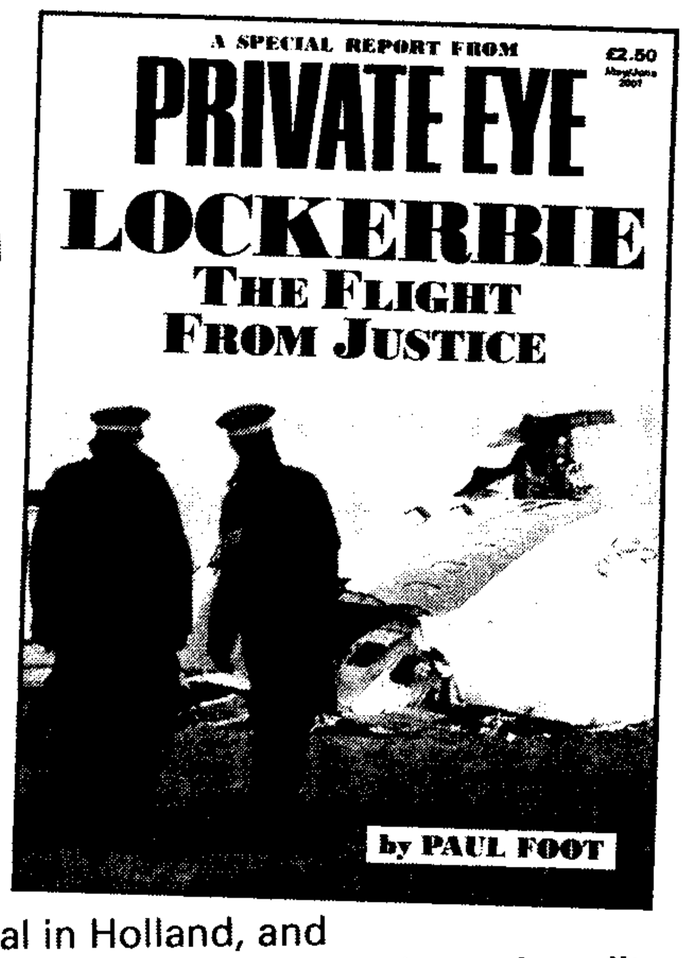
Had the government heeded advice from the world's top foot-and-mouth experts, the epidemic could have been halted within weeks, restoring the UK's export trade sooner, saving rural communities from despair and Britain's countryside from a financial, social and environmental disaster.

LOCKERBIE

THE FLIGHT FROM JUSTICE

A special *Eye* issue telling the story of the hunt for the bombers of Pan Am Flight 103 in December 1988. 270 people were killed in the biggest mass murder in British history.

The report traces the murder hunt by intelligence agencies and police, through their original suspicions of a Palestinian terrorist gang based in Syria, and paid by Iran, to the charging of two Libyans. It examines the evidence at the trial in Holland, and disputes the verdict that one of the accused men is guilty.

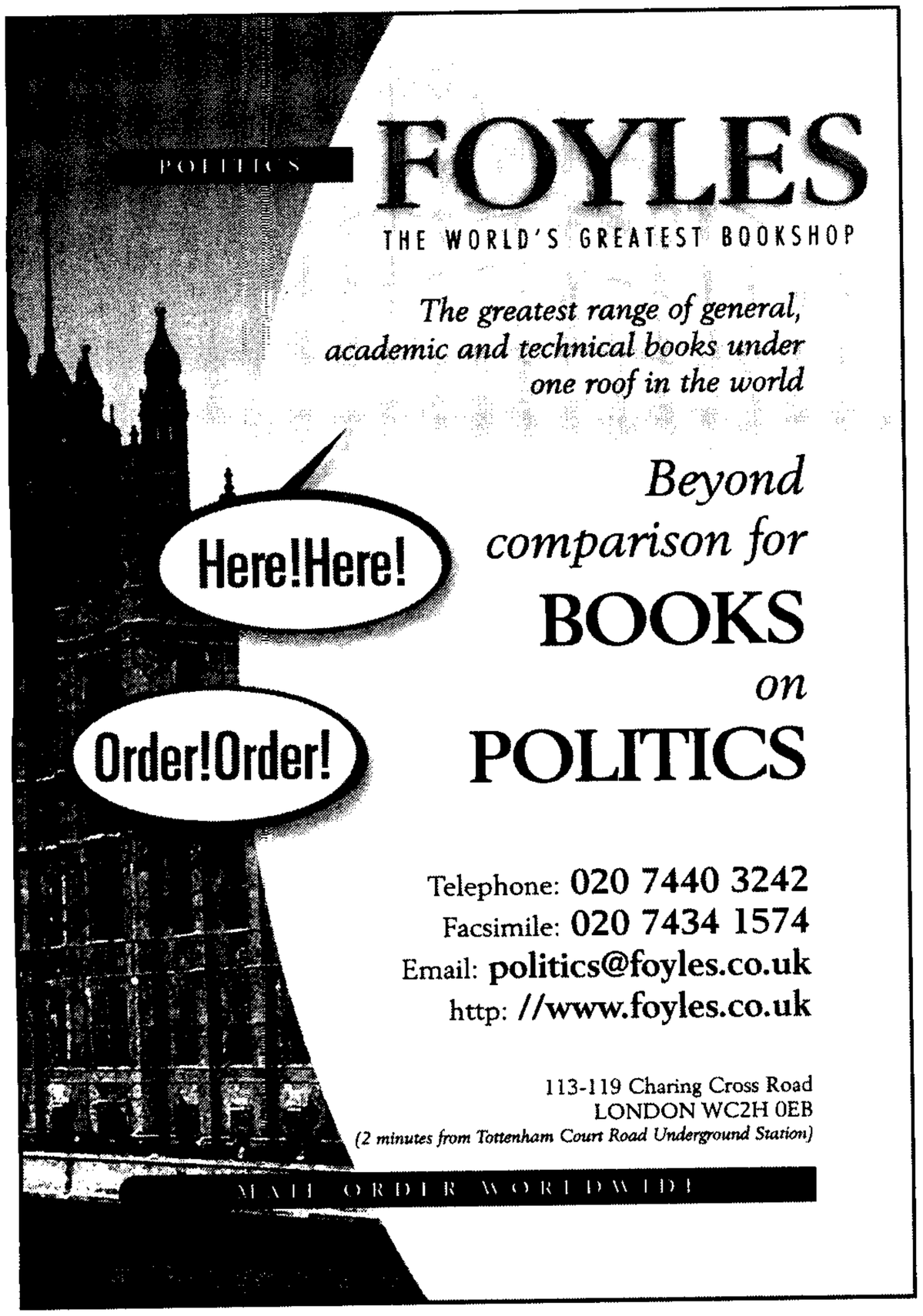


ONLY AVAILABLE DIRECT FROM

PRIVATE EYE

Price £2.50 each (inc p&p). To order call:

020 7228 6457 or 020 7228 6457



specialEYEs

meeting people

★ STOCKBROKERS • DOCTORS • ADVERTISING • ACCOUNTANTS • ARCHITECTS ★

MARKETING • DESIGNERS

EDUCATIONALISTS • WRITERS

drawing down *the* moon

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION CONSULTANTS - THE FIRST AND FINEST

"a partner for life...that's where Drawing Down the Moon comes in"
FINANCIAL TIMES

020-7937 6263

www.drawingdownthemoon.co.uk

Head Office: Adam & Eve Mews, Kensington. *City Office:* Cannon Street
24 hours. Member ABIA. Est. 1984

★ MEDIA COMPANY DIRECTORS • LAWYERS • PR • BANKERS • SCIENTISTS ★

www.ivorytowers.net

The new intelligent online **friendship and matchmaking site**, for alumni, postgraduates and students of all eras.

It's a new way of doing an old thing.

Free Trial Period

Looking for somewhere to advertise?
communications team **T: 020 7923 5416**

gifts

Evie Boat!

An animated card model for you to make! Order this and other models online or phone for a catalogue 01900 814333

www.flying-pig.co.uk

BIRTHDAY NEWSPAPERS

Births, Birthdays, Weddings, Christenings, Anniversaries, Retirements. Papers from archives 1642-2002. Sundays from 1915. Quality presentations. Same day dispatch.

REMEMBER WHEN
445 Brighton Road,
Croydon, Surrey CR2 6EU
www.remember-when.co.uk

020 8763 6363
or call FREE 0500 520 000

cartoons

menu

biogs

books

gallery

exhibitions

Cartoon Gallery

A selection of cartoons, illustrations and animated cels can be found on the **Cartoon Gallery Website**, from **Chris Riddell** to **Steve Bell, Alex** to **Appleby, Honeysett** to **Husband** and **McLachlan** to **Matt.**

The site also has extensive biographies, including **Ronald Searle** and **Kipper Williams** and the **Search by Subject** pages contain **12** categories from **Art** to **Therapy,** showing over **120** original cartoons.

All cartoons and books are dispatched within three working days via our mail order department, so..... for the speculative and gift buyer alike, please visit:

www.cartoongallery.co.uk

The Cartoon Gallery 39 Great Russell St. London WC1B 3PH
tel: 020-7636-1011 fax: 020-7436-5053 e mail: cartoongallery@easynet.co.uk

speechwriting

SPEECHWRITING SERVICES

CORPORATE • SOCIAL • POLITICAL
Fully Customised and confidential

MAKE EM LAUGH OR NO FEE!

Emergency Speeches Undertaken

Britain's leading Professional

MITCH MURRAY

01624 622660

Visa - Mastercard

property

OFFICES DIRECT

Suppliers of Immediately available office accommodation with an an all-inclusive package throughout Belgravia, Mayfair and the City.

200 – 5,000 sq.ft.

call for more information

020 7491 8815

surveillance

DO YOU *REALLY* KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON?

SUSPECT SOMETHING'S GOING ON? FIND OUT - WITHOUT BEING FOUND OUT!

Disloyalty can be dangerous. It's often damaging and invariably hurtful. Commercially, it's usually expensive. You may not like the idea of using 'bugging' equipment but it can heighten your awareness and help you anticipate. You'll be amazed how we conceal microphones and tiny cameras in the most innocent and ordinary everyday objects.

LORRAINE ELECTRONICS SURVEILLANCE
716 Lea Bridge Road, London E10 6AW.
Fax: 020 8558 1338
Central London Showroom:
59 South Audley Street, W1K 2QN
Web Site: www.lorraine.co.uk
TEL: 020 8558 4226

motoring

MARKET VEHICLES LTD
IMPORT DIVISION

RHD UK Spec, **save £000's**

Audi, BMW, Chrysler, Land Rover, Mercedes Benz, Saab, Vauxhall, VW

cars with 2 or 3 year manufacturers warranties, finance arranged.

PHONE : 023 9257 1957
FAX : 023 9257 1857
Email:sales@marketvehicles.com
www.marketvehicles.com

puzzles

Engerrland. Engerrland.

Know someone who LOVES football?

Send r★fur

Birthdays, Anniversaries, Good luck? Whatever the occasion, show them you care, send the bear! **r★fur** carries your personal message in his rucksack with pride and style. And he's delivered overnight** to the destination of your choice

CALL 0870 755 7387

OR VISIT www.sendrfur.com

ONLY £35*

* Plus postage & packing

** UK Mainland next working day delivery by Royal Mail Special Delivery Service. Overseas destinations available at extra cost

Approx 28cm tall. r★fur © Be Bear Designs 2002 - all rights reserved.

CROSSWORD MAESTRO FOR WINDOWS

Solves and explains cryptic crossword clues in plain English! Ideal for experienced solvers, those wanting to improve their solving skills and beginners wanting to learn how cryptic crosswords work! A major break-through in artificial intelligence!

To order on CD-ROM call **0870 842 2000**. Quote reference PE1 to obtain the special price of only £39.95 (+£2.95 UK shipping).

FULL 30-DAY MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE!

For full details and to download the software directly to your computer, please go to:

www.cluesolver.co.uk

Genius 2000 Software, Dept. PE1034, FREEPOST, Dunoon, Argyll PA23 7UZ

travel

ITALY

Farmhouses·cottages·villas

The finest selection of holiday properties throughout the prettiest regions of Italy and Sicily. Many with pool.

08700 780 186

QUOTE REF I323

www.indiv-travellers.com

VACANZE IN ITALIA

AITO 1010 ATOL PROTECTED 2433

Hidden Ireland

CLAPPED OUT?

Revive your spirits with[illegible] in one of Ireland's best country houses. A special experience in grand style for a not-so-grand cost.

Contact The Hidden Ireland at +353 98 66650 or visit our website.

www.hidden-ireland.com

clubs

The Blue Angel Club

welcomes you and your friends for a really unforgettable evening. Drink, or dine and dance in luxurious surroundings and be served or entertained by our Angels.

Open Monday to Friday from 6.30pm until late

Membership not required.

17 Little Portland Street, London W1N 5DE Tel: 020 7636 2178

To grow cannabis remains illegal - without a Home Office licence!

Cannabis

Books - Seeds - Scales - Pipes - Bongs

T-Shirts - Vapourisers - Herb Grinders - Etc.

Seeds

Holland's Sensi Seedbank

15 Seeds per pack

Details quoted are time to flowering, approx. height & Yields to be expected.

Shiva Shant II - Code S03 Price £14.95 - 45 - 55 days, 120 - 150 cm. Indoor plants. 100g

Sensi Skunk - Code S04 Price £18.95 - 45 - 50 days, 120 - 150 cm. 100g Indoor, 500g greenhouse.

Skunk #1 - Code S05 Price £18.95 - 45 - 50 days, 120 - 150 cm. 100g Indoor, 500g greenhouse.

Super Skunk - Code S06 Price £34.95 - 45 - 50 days, 120 - 150 cm. 125g Indoor, 500g greenhouse.

Herb Grinders

Rosewood Herb Grinder
(metal pins) Code: M14 Price: £6.95

Polycarbonate Herb Grinder
- with built in stash compartment.
Code: M15 Price: £8.95

BUD BUDDY all metal
So beautifully designed & crafted, it's almost art. It will be your lifetime buddy! Code: M17 Price: £18.95

Books

Indoor Marijuana Horticulture
The classic 'Indoor Bible' - the latest information on indoor cultivation at your fingertips! Learn how growers harvest over pound of great bud per 1000w bulb, per 60 days!
RECOMMENDED! Code: B09 Price: £19.95

Marijuana Grower's Guide -
Delux Edition. Whether you are using a window box or acres of land, this has the information to make it better:
Code B04 - Price £17.95

Closet Cultivator - New Edition
Covers the most advanced 'gardening' techniques in plain English. It shows how easy maintenance 'gardens' are built out of simple low cost household items.
Code B03 - Price £13.95

Cooking with Ganja - by Eric
Teaches all you need to know about cooking with cannabis. Such mouthwatering sweets, savory delights, or 'Ganja Crisps' for those munchy attacks!
Code B13 - Price £7.45

The Joint Rolling Handbook
Detailed step-by-step rolling instructions for the world's most infamous joints! Professional tips tricks and techniques! Over 250 illustrations,diagrams and cartoons.
Code B02 - Price £5.95

For a catalogue: send 2x1st class stamps to the address below.
TO ORDER: Just state quantity of each code required, total your order - add £1 postage on all orders upto £10, £2 on orders upto £30 - **POST FREE on orders over £30!** Foward with your name & address and cheque/ PO payable to:
MAIL ORDER SERVICES, Dept.S, Freepost SWB 11012, Taunton, TA1 5ZB.

Be Amazed, Be Amused @ www.

WHSpliff.net

OM SAI RAM

BESPOKE

SUITS & SHIRTS

HONG KONG'S leading ladies & gentlemans custom tailor is now offering Saville Row style suits' from **£129.00** and shirts from **£19.00.**

For your appointment please call **MR RAJA DASWANI,** Chief Designer and Professional Fashion Adviser to measure you personally and show you thousands of world famous brand name fabrics and latest fashion magazines featuring Business, Leisure and Evening wear at the

Sheraton Park Tower, 101 Knightsbridge, London SW1X 7RN from 8th April – 14th April, from 23rd April – 26th April & from 27th May – 2nd June
Telephone: 020 7235 8050 Fax: 020 7235 8231

Marriot Hotel, 2 Lower Castle Street, Old Market, Bristol BS1 3AD from 15th April – 16th April
Telephone: 0117 929 4281 Fax: 0117 927 6377

Hilton Glasgow, 1 William Street, Glasgow G3 8HT, Scotland from 10th April – 12th April
Telephone: 0141 204 5555 Fax: 0141 204 5004

George Inter Continental Edinburgh, 19-21 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PB from 20th April – 21st April
Hours 10.00am to 8.00pm for an appointment.

Please Email, fax or call us in HONG KONG for an appointment with MR.RAJA DASWANI.
or alternatively call his suite during his visit.

APPOINTMENTS CAN ALSO BE TAKEN FOR UK VENUES ON TEL: 01635 574 233

Our Special Offer for Ladies
1.Wool Suit
1 Silk Blouse
1 Silk Dress
All from £188

Our Special offer for Gents
1 Super Fine Wool Suit
1 Blazer or Sports Jacket
1 Matching Pair of Slacks & 2 Silk ties
All from £188

RAJA FASHIONS

34-C Cameron Rd., Ground Floor, Kowloon, Hong Kong

Email: raja@raja-fashions.com URL: http://www.raja-fashions.com Tel: (852) 2366 7624 Fax: (852) 2369 2807

PRIVATE EYE

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

020 7837 4566

£2.25 per word (£22.50 min charge)
Bordered style £10 Box Number £10
Two weeks repeated on Private Eye's Website (www.private-eye.co.uk): £10
All charges VAT inclusive
Reply to Box Numbers at address below

Deadline for next issue: April 9th

private-eye@communicationsteam.com
Fax: 020 7923 5401
Feedback form: www.private-eye.co.uk

Communications Team, Exmouth House, 3-11 Pine Street, London EC1R 0JH

EYE SAY

HAPPY BIRTHDAY SARAH BALLARD. Love Adam.

NEED A FUNNY SPEAKER FOR YOUR FUNCTION? www.comedianUK.com

MAD SOMERSET WOMAN – happy birthday – love from Scouse twat.

MI5 PERSECUTION – BBC "See You See Me." They can, apparently. www.five.org.uk/evidence/#cucm

SPEECHWRITING by Britain's LEADING PROFESSIONAL, Mitch Murray – see page 34.

EYE NOVELTIES

CONJURING TRICKS – for professional and beginner. Free catalogue: Tel: 0117 977 4334 – www.magicbypost.com

"MERDE IL PLEUT" umbrellas £24.99 – OVERHEADS, 1 Wick Close, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 2NQ.

BIRTHDAY STAR: Name one for her/him. NASA accredited. Superb certificate, star map, gift letter for £25. Details from Eurostell Intergalactic Register, PO Box 246, 8101 Paphos, Cyprus.

PHOTOBANNERS FOR BIRTHDAYS, WEDDINGS, PARTIES, EXHIBITIONS AND DISPLAYS – 6' BANNER with photograph: £39.95 without: £29.95 0121 241 7878 – www.ctgraphics.co.uk

NUCLEAR WASTE, AGENT ORANGE, CYANIDE AND SEMEN: HEAT SENSITIVE MUGS. At first: plain black mugs sitting innocently on the shelf. Add hopt water: hazard warnings appear! £10 each. Non-toxic. 020 8527 2513 – www.poisonmugs.co.uk

ORGANIC ALES FRESH FROM THE HIGHLANDS – www.blackislebrewery.com – 01463 811871.

RUSSIAN WATCH CATALOGUE available from Mr Tomanek, 93 Mansfield Road, Nottingham, NG1 3FN . www.russianwatches.co.uk

EYE ORGASM. Girls – the cheapest Rabbit vibrator in the country. www.heavens-above.org

GIFTS FOR THE REDHEAD IN YOUR LIFE – www.redandproud.com – Tel: 01844 274635.

ANDY WARHOL-STYLE personalised portraits: "The ideal gift." – www.justlikeandy.com

TITLES – LORD, LADY etc. Tel/Fax 0800 652 6641. www.elitetitles.co.uk

TITLE PLUS LAND FOR £20. HONEST! Details: SURVIVAL,(P), The Cabin, STRATHY, Scotland KW14 7RY.

JOKE TEETH – TIRED OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT?? Need a change in your social life?? Then hook yerself up with Billy-Bob Teeth!! Visit www.sillyteeth.co.uk or call (01422) 430580.

"WHAT A BRILLIANT SITE!" Shop for fun @ www.gizmoandwidget.com

PERSONALISED CHAMPAGNE – YOUR UNIQUE MESSAGE PRINTED ON THE LABEL delivered NEXTDAY nationwide £29 020 7737 8030 - www.nextdaychampagne.co.uk

BIRTHDAY NEWSPAPERS FREEPHONE 0800 906609 www.historic-newspapers.co.uk

M.A.STURGE JEWELLERS. Something different, scrumptious, exquisite, handmade – www. masturge.com

WANT SOMETHING TO TANTALISE YOUR TASTEBUDS BUT ALSO EXCITE YOU? Then call CAKEXPLICIT. 020 8459 3133 www.cakexplicit.com

EYE HELP

LIMITED OR PLC COMPANIES – £90. Brochure: FREEPHONE 0800 526 421, E-mail: cosun@drink.demon.co.uk

INVENTOR SEEKING REPRESENTATION? Established international license brokers based in Bucks offer confidential appraisal and advice. IILP member. See www.inventionsuk.com.

OUCH! INJURED IN AN ACCIDENT? Can you claim compensation? Free on-line advice from specialist lawyer. See OUCH at www.willans.co.uk

BUYING ORIENTAL RUGS? Free, impartial, professional advice saves serious money. Oriental Rug Information Services, phone/fax 01274 340441. E-mail: oris77@aol.com

EYESIGHT – VALUE YOUR EYES & HANDS? Stay lucky, or claim £150,000. Visit milocover.co.uk or listen (1 minute) on 01865 308928.

SPEECH? PRESENTATION? Expert coaching by Hugo Summerson (former MP) 0207-235-5785 London SW1 www.speaker-skills-training.co.uk

PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY CLAIMS. LOST OUT DUE TO BAD ADVICE? Why don't you sue your adviser? Contact GORVIN, SMITH, FORT SOLICITORS and we'll do it for you. FREEPHONE 0800 214531 or E-mail enquiries@gorvin.co.uk

MASTER PHOTOGRAPHER black/white specialist offers family, individual, Hollywood portraits. 020 8459 2543.

CONFIDENTIAL MAILING ADDRESS. PERSONAL OR BUSINESS. 9 central London locations – 24hr access. Mail forwarding, voicemail, free fax and E-mail receipt. Prices from £13/month. MAIL BOXES ETC – 0800 0838 069.

SPEECHWRITING. BY BRITAIN'S LEADING PROFESSIONAL, Mitch Murray – see page 34.

SORT IT! OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE ORGANISES FILES, ARCHIVES, LIBRARIES. Business or personal, computer or paper. Free quote. 07771 562863 – sorted@meister.com

ACCOMMODATION ADDRESS – PRIVATE, DISCREET, CONFIDENTIAL mail/message-holding service, REGENT STREET. Established 1979. 020 7580 4242. E-mail: enquiry@hold-everything.com – Web site: www.hold-everything.com

EYE LEARN

YOU CAN DO MAGIC – Amaze your friends and family – www.MagicTricks.co.uk

ANTIDOTE TO WRITERS' BLOCK – Inspirational weekend course for writers. 13/14 April. Release your talent. "An extraordinary environment for learning" www.the-spontaneity-shop.com – 020 7428 0992

LIFE PAINTING and Contemporary Mosaic courses available – Languedoc. www.artholiday.com

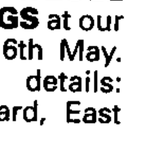
GNOME STUDY – cartooning courses with EYE cartoonists. Learn at home by mail or from CD-ROM – www.draw-cartoons.com – or telephone 01785 250700.

EYE HEAR

WACKY SEX, DRUGS COMPILATION CD 'Musigyny', only £6.66. Heretical, PO Box 1004, Hull, HU3 2YT.

JUKEBOX HIRE FOR PARTIES. 7" vinyl and/or CDs. Delivered. From £140 – 020 8318 2852.

EYE SELL



GOLD SOVEREIGNS – Edward VII and George V £65 pp. Details (C.P.) PO Box 5963, Invergordon, IV18 0LY.

SEND FREE SMS TEXT MESSAGES from http://sms.a-q.co.uk

ELECTRIC SCOOTERS! CHEAP! also soon: SOLAR POWERED GARDEN LIGHTS, even cheaper! ALLROUND LTD. 01953-888858.www.allroundscooters.com

CELLULAR TELEPHONE JAMMERS available for all European GSM networks – buy now at www.globalgadgetuk.com

NEED A NEW HI-FI? For anything from DVD to Minidisc, surround sound to CD – nip down to RICHER SOUNDS and pick up the lowest-priced gear in the UK... GUARANTEED! FOR A FREE BARGAIN-PACKED CATALOGUE, call 0845 1 300 200.

OLD PERSIAN RUGS – MARQUEE SALE OF OLD ORIENTAL RUGS at our Kent Country House, 4th, 5th, 6th May. Mostly £100-£3000. Card, details: DESMOND NORTH, The Orchard, East Peckham. 01622 871353.

EYE CARE

FALLOPIAN TUBE TROUBLE? NEW TREATMENT, NO SURGERY. NO DRUGS, NON INVASIVE. To take part in free trial send brief details to Box 1851.

HERBAL V – SAFE, NATURAL SEXUAL TONIC guaranteed. www.herbalvy.com or call 020 7924 3675.

HYPNOTHERAPY WORKS! Come and see Jessica Richards in Harley St; London Medical Centre 020 7935 0023 – richjess@globalnet.co.uk

STOP SMOKING GUARANTEED. One session. Other problems sensitively addressed – 020 7357 9905.

'ERECTION CORRECTION' – VIR Clinics offer all effective treatments. 0800 163861 or www.vir-clinics.com

CLINICAL NEGLIGENCE CLAIMS. LOST OUT DUE TO INCOMPETENCE? Why don't you sue? Contact GORVIN, SMITH, FORT SOLICITORS And we'll do it for you. FREEPHONE 0800 214531 or E-mail enquiries@gorvin.co.uk

ERECTILE DISFUNCTION – NO MORE – 0701 071 8424. EuroMed.

EYE TECH

FREE DOMAIN NAME! Web design, hosting and more. Packages to suit all – www.intothenet.co.uk/pe – or 08700 750

REGISTER .CO.UK DOMAIN NAMES FOR £10 AND .COM NAMES FOR £18. For more details visit http://sms.a-q.co.uk or Tel: 0800 389 5815

COMPUTER TROUBLE? LET A GENUINE PC EXPERT HELP YOU with advice, installation, setup, programming and trouble-shooting – and save yourself some big headaches. Call TOBY on 020 7229 3001 for friendly, professional advice.

PRINTER CARTRIDGES – SAVE £££'S HUGE SAVINGS on Inkjet Cartridges & Toner Cartridges for HP, Epson, Canon, Lexmark etc. Tel: 0800 917 4073 Fax: 0800 917 4074 – www.inkjet4.com

DOMAIN NAME REGISTRATION: .co.uk, .com, .biz etc. – An efficient, competitive and reliable service from an established company. Free after sales support. Visit www.123domainnames.co.uk or call 0113 242 4518.

EYE DETECT

DISCREET & EFFECTIVE International Private Investigations. UK PRIVATE INVESTIGATORS – 0800 980 2792.

BUGGING DEVICE transmits to FM radio. £12.95 – Cheques/Visa: MICROTEC, 8 Chestnut Road, Guildford, GU1 1HG – 01483 570417. www.spys.co.uk

LINK INVESTIGATIONS – Private And Commercial Investigators Tracing, Surveillance, Staff Vetting, Undercover Agents, Matrimonial, Debugging, etc. Tel: 01306 880707 Fax: 01306 888077. E-mail: info@linkinvestigations.co.uk Web: www.linkinvestigations. co.uk

PRIVATE DETECTIVE (James Black). 'Privateye's Privateye'. Tracing, recovery, fraud. www.crib2.com – 0121 247 2600.

EYE FINANCE

THEATRE DIRECTOR PLEA FOR 'ANGELS'! £16,000 to stage 'Isabella', Keats' House, Hampstead. RSC actors. Ref: refraction, Barclays Soho Square 20-78-98, 00988499.

BUSINESS INVESTOR NEEDED for B&B refurbishment in upcoming coastal resort. Good return offered. Telephone 0800 0748480.

WE INCORPORATE COMPANIES £98 + vat – 01306 888542 – www.formacompany.co.uk/pe/

HELP SAVE THE PLANET BY INVESTING IN NON-POLLUTING VEHICLES. Proven prototype, simple technology. Genuine. Phone 07762 889281.

ANY ANGELS OUT THERE? Sleeping partner wanted for upmarket but undercapitalised contemporary jewellery and studio arts and crafts gallery. Box 1751.

EYE JOBS

THRIVING, EXPANDING BUSINESS, London Bridge area, seeks motivated, reliable organised individual to join our team. Successful applicants will be friendly and willing to deal with public and cover various tasks. 020 7357 0111.

SUMMER JOBS DIRECTORIES ABROAD OR BRITAIN (£9.99) and USA (£12.95) list 50,000 + vacancies. From bookshops or Vac Work, 9 Park End Street, Oxford (tel: 01865 241978).

YOU ARE NEEDED IN MALAWI OR MOZAMBIQUE. Volunteer at a development project: *Help present the spreading of AIDS. *Plant trees. *Work with Orphans. *Build latrines. 14 months programme, 6 months training included (boarding fees). College for International Co-operation and Development. Phone 01964 631826. E-mail cicd@btinternet.com – www.btinternet.com/~cicd

EYE EARN

DESTINED FOR SUCCESS? Substantial earnings for serious individuals. Tel: 020 8654 9192 – www.brighterwealth.com

WANT A 2ND INCOME BUT DON'T LIKE SELLING? This fully automated website does it for you. Massive earnings potential. Visit website for testimonials. www.dontlikeselling.com

PROFIT FROM PROPERTY – details: Adams Real Estate Limited, 2 Middle Stoke, Bath BA2 7GE.

EYE BET

www.freebetontheworldcup.com – Over two hundred pounds of free bets.

EYE NEED

LIFE SUPPORT FOR LEFT-HANDERS – Additional finance/support needed to establish charitable foundation. Aims: to raise awareness of handedness issues, provide help and guidance for left-handers and fund relevant research. Box 1351.

PROTECT THE INNOCENT! About to lose home; new baby arriving imminently. £20,000 to survive. Barclays 20-17-19 50638218.

PLEASE HELP. Terrible life-threatening situation. Absolutely desperate. SARAH 77-63-13, 65778968 – TSB.

£22.50 TO PAY FOR THIS AD. Smile 08-92-88 a/c 01190906. Much appreciated. skint@scunnered.com

PLEASE HELP SINGLE EX-NURSE MUM fund complementary therapy training also bright daughter through uni. Barclays 20-56-78 00999199 Thanks

SINGLE MOTHER 4 CHILDREN, working, buying home, needs money for loft conversion please help. Co-operative 08-93-00, 02302890. charly@klesks.fsworld.co.uk.

RE PERSONAL BANKRUPTCY. Huge thanks to those who have helped so far, but we are still short by £33k. We are desperate. Please help. NatWest 60-03-27, 53260279. Or Box 2151.

WIFE IS DIVORCING ME for another man. Nationwide 07-00-30, 58994549.

BIG DIGGER OR CASH to restore an old Mill Pond. Dedicated to Spike – for no reason at all. Information: Pantyrodyn@cs.com

DAUGHTER KIDNAPPED BY LYING HUSBAND AND MISTRESS. £8000 needed urgently for legal fees. Please help. RBS 83-06-08, A/c 250026.

DEDICATED POETRY TRANSLATOR HAMPERED by severe ME and spiralling debts. HSBC 40-43-23, 01201387.

DEPORTATION ORDER THREATENS SCOT / CANADIAN MARRIAGE. Costs plus bureaucrats endangering homes, cats, love! 20-29-77 40096423.

DESPERATE DISABLED GRADUATE offered oxford PhD £30,000 needed. account 71382934 sort 40-24-01 HSBC.

EXPANDING ANDELUCIAN RAINBOW COMMUNITY needs funds to buy land. Details Box 0751.

DESPERATE! NEED HELP. Account Number 04248667 Abbey National Sort Code 09-01-26

IDLE LAYABOUT REQUIRES £1000 TO RESUME BOOZY LIFESTYLE. LloydsTSB 30-96-88, 00009548.

THE FRIENDS OF L'ASTAZOU URGENTLY NEED MONEY to help to purchase the L'Astazou ('Across') site at Lourdes for continued use by disabled adults. See www.lastazou.org.uk – or donations to Bank of Ireland 30-00-50, 49608455.

EYE COLLECT

PLEASURE AND INVESTMENT. Autographs and memorabilia. Call Europe's largest dealer – Free-phone 0800 731 0852 or www.frasersautographs.com

WISDENS & CRICKET BOOKS WANTED. Best prices paid. MR BODYLINE: 020 7385 2176 – www.bodylinebooks.com.

EYE WANT

LEYLANDII HATING LAWYER desired to assist fight against monster hedge/neighbour. www.ivor.org

CASH PAID FOR OLD FOOTBALL PROGRAMMES (pre 1960s). Telephone: 020 7437 3333 or E-mail: David.Sturge@btopenworld.com

EYE BUYS

EYES 785 TO DATE – few early ones missing. Offers 01332 384 161.

140 EYES – mostly 1979 to '84 offers. Box 0651

EYES 1969 TO '71. Offers: 020 8985 0479.

EYES 550 TO DATE (5 missing) + 7 BINDERS, offers to 07747 611877.

EYE READ

PUBLISH FOR PROFIT with www.NoSpine.com – 100s of titles available on-line.

OUT OF PRINT BOOKS FOUND – free search. No obligation to purchase – 01376 562334. E-mail: Jeremy.Dore@tesco.net

A.N.WILSON, EVELYN BARBIROLLI AND DECCA AITKENHEAD are all speaking at THE OLDIE LITERARY LUNCH on April 16th at Simpson's-in-the-Strand. Fur further details please call BEN TISDALL on 020 7436 8803.

Save up to £405

just by changing your credit card.

- 2.9% per annum for purchases and balance transfers until 1st January 2003
- Standard rate is 16.9% APR
- No annual fee
- Up to 56 days interest-free credit**

With a balance on your card of £3,000	Save up to*	APR
Barclaycard Standard Visa	£380	17.9%
Lloyds TSB Asset Visa/MasterCard	£380	17.9%
HSBC Standard Visa/MasterCard	£405	18.9%
The Royal Bank of Scotland	–	16.9%

Savings calculated on 2.9% introductory rate per annum

The Royal Bank of Scotland plc. Registered Office: 36 St Andrew Square, Edinburgh EH2 2YB. Registered in Scotland No. 90312

Make it happen.

0800 16 16 16

Quote ref: 483235

The Royal Bank of Scotland

*The savings are based on maintaining a balance of £3,000 from 1st February 2002 and take account of annual fees where applied and interest charges on the average daily balance for one full year inclusive of the introductory rate until 1st January 2003 and thereafter **16.9% APR** variable. **19.7% APR** for cash advances. Note: Written quotations are available. Subject to status. The Classic cards are only available to persons aged 18 or over with an income of £10,000 pa. Gold cards are only available to persons aged 21 and over with an income of £20,000 pa. Cardholder is required to make monthly payments within 25 days of statement date of 3% of the outstanding balance or £5, whatever is greater. APRs are based on a £1,000 credit limit. The APRs for the other cards are their standard rates and exclude any short term special offers. Rates as at 18th January 2002. Telephone calls may be recorded or monitored. **Available on purchases and balance transfers if you repay the whole balance each month.

VINTAGE GLAMOUR – Three decades of UNDERWEAR. The Seams: over 600 photos on CD-ROM. Bras, girdles, corsets and lingerie from the post-war years. £14.99 includes Seams magazine FREE! Halcyon, 21 Princes Street, Earl's Barton, Northants NN6 0LL

MANAGING BRITANNIA – "I've been reading a terrific new book called Managing Britannia, by Robert Protherough and John Pick. It's about the way that the idea of management has come to take over swaths of British life." (Simon Hoggart in The Grauniad) For more than thirty years the solution to all Britain's problems has been more management. Yet, strangely, things often seem worse organised than before. Managing Britannia offers plenty of evidence to show that modern management practices cannot be applied to the realms of politics, education, culture and religion without general destruction. They cannot even be generally applied in business. Modern management is not a cure for our ills but a principal cause. If you have any tendency to defer to managers, cure it with this book. Managing Britannia, ISBN 0-907839-68-1, 212 pages demy 8vo, hard covers, £18.00. Order in any bookshop or post-free direct from Edgeways Books FREEPOST SWC4706 CORBRIDGE NE45 5BR (cheque with order please) or visit www.edgewaysbooks.com for easy secure credit-card ordering. Many other delights there too including (just published) Brian Lee, The Heart of All England. What do you do if you wake one morning and find that the world is absolutely different and that nobody else notices? Read on and find out. The Heart of All England, 0-907839-69-X, 230 pages small crown 8vo, hard covers, £15.00.

AMERICAN boob magazines Juggs Voluptuous and more: SAE FNB Media, POBox 9741, Tamworth, Staffs B77

EYE PROTECT

CHEATING PARTNER? professional semen detector kit gives you instant proof. 100% Money back guarantee. 01582 696911 – www.getcheckmate.co.uk

EYE JOIN

PREFER NO AMERICAN EMPIRE? Alternative is democratic world government through a reformed and strengthened U.N. advocated by world federalists. For details write: AWF-PE, P O Box 3410, Colchester CO7 6QW.

JOIN THE PETER COOK APPRECIATION SOCIETY, : £8. p.a. 64 Pitchford St, Stratford, London, E15 4RZ.

EYE HOMES

GENUINE NON-MATERIALISTIC rural living in the purity of Southern Spain – www.vergel-alpujarra.com

EYE HOMEHUNT

WRITER, 45, NEEDS MONDAY TO FRIDAY accommodation in London – tomq@cla.org.uk

EYE FLY

WORLDWIDE LOWEST PRICES – ALLEGEDLY! Tel: 01942 603599 / 680268 – Fax: 01942 670868. Agents ATOL holders.

FLIGHT OPTIONS – telephone booking service. Tel: 01432 851062, Fax: 01432 850722, HENRY ROGERS, ATOL 3793.

AWARD WINNING SERVICE, IMPARTIAL ADVICE, COMPETITIVE PRICES: 01423 867226, Fax: 01423 869335. E-mail: info@rtknaresborough.fsnet.co.uk Website: www.ryedaletravel.co.uk – ABTA 28716.

EYE ESCAPE

SWIM WITH WILD DOLPHINS and desert adventures with Bedouin nomads in Sinai. Wild and Free: www.dolphinswims.co.uk

BEAUTIFUL OLD MILL, Provence, Flats for rent, B & B, Visit: www.levieux-moulin.co.uk

ITALY – ROMANTIC APARTMENT in wonderful rural setting from £295 p/week www.holiday-rentals.co.uk (ref 2880) or sookay@tin.it

LARGE HOUSE – seven bedrooms, pool, courtyards, walled garden, to rent near Carcassonne (Ryanair) – www.artholiday.com

SOMERSET LEVELS. Two lovingly restored barns. www.somersetholidays.com. T. 01823 491 405.

NEED A COTSWOLD HOTEL FOR £20 A NIGHT? Don't bother us then! www.cotswoldsfinesthotels.com – 01452 425673

COTSWOLD GLIDING CLUB. 4&5 day holiday courses inclusive of all flying and instruction. Prices from £200. Tel: 01285 760415.

CRETE FOR LOVERS. Private village houses/hotels. Singles/Couples 00 30 822 032 030. – www.crete-direct.com

SURF, WINDSURF & CLIMB on the stunning North Cornish Coast week or w/end breaks. 01288 361312 – www.OutdoorAdventure.co.uk

EYE SEEK

TORTURED DUTCH ARTIST prepared to give an ear to any proposal. Call: 'WHO'S IN THE BAG?' – 0800 389 4748.

EYE CONTACT

VEGETARIAN/VEGAN? Unattached? VMM is the introduction agency specially for you. Tel: 01925 601609 -- www.veggiematchmakers.com

MISS JAPAN INTRODUCTIONS AG. Romance, marriage. Offices: UK, Europe, Japan. www.mr-england.com – Tel: 020 7738 0666.

MATCHMAKER MAG for adults contacts. Over 900 photos. Approval copy from: MATCHMAKER, (S.76), Chorley, PR7 4BS. Or ring: 01257 483335 (24 hours).

THAI PARTNERS. New ethical agency introduces your ideal wife. Brochure, video 07810 562024 – kthcastell@aol.com

SINGLES CHAT – 100s of girls LIVE ONLINE – 0906 759 0601*. Gay – 0906 759 0602*. *75p/min. Calls recorded. Premier Telecom, 16085, London EC1V 2NW.

BEAUTIFUL RUSSIAN LADIES – Colour brochures and much more. Call Nick & Lilya. 01423 566766 (24hrs)– www.russian-rendezvous.co.uk

THAI LADIES – Superb videos. Colour brochure SIAM INTRODUCTIONS (established 14 years) as seen on TV (22 times!) – 01689 860880. www.siam-intro.com

EYE ORGASM. Boys, are you a 'mate without a date'? No worries, just visit www.heavens-above.org

ASIAN PARTNERS: Suman Marriage Bureau. Established 1972. Member ABIA. 020 8571 5145 or www.suman-online.com

THAI CONNECTION – Thailand's oldest agency celebrates 650 marriages. Videos, brochure: 01582 481725.

RUSSIAN LADIES SEEK RELATIONSHIP / marriage. Introductions in UK. Affordable trips to Moscow/St. Petersburg. Unlimited introductions. Excellent success rate. Phone IFM 01708 478697.

NATURAL FRIENDS – quality on & off-line introductions. Free brochure 0800 281 933 – www.natural-friends.com

PRIVATE ADULT PENFRIENDS – 3x27p stamps to EPPS, PO Box 36, Dartford, DA2 7ZU.

MAN TO MAN GAY CHAT 0906 952 6006* Website: http://www.adultphonechat.net *75p/min.PO Box 17, Ashford,TN23 7YQ

ADDITIONS – 'ATTACHED' Discreet Loving Agency for married people. 020 8905 3304, 020 8958 9657. Established 1992.

Findyourperfectpartner.com - you may just click! Our MutualMatch system is the world's most accurate.

PERSON TO PERSON for genuine friends and partners, all ages, U.K. or overseas. Details: (Dept PE) P.O. Box 40, Minehead, TA24 5YS – 01643 709509.

BRAND NEW CLUB CONCEPT for broadminded adults /singles, gays, lesbians. Hurry – limited membership! www.clubseduct.com

FREE CONTACTS/ADULT PARTIES. Club membership pack: www.club-aphrodite.com - 0870 220 2527.

CHAT & DATE 0906 752 6299*, LIVE 1-2-1 CHAT 0906 734 3206**. *75p/min.**£1/min. PO Box 17, Ashford, TN23 7YQ. http://www.adultphonechat.net

ATTACHED? SEEKING ROMANCE? Call David at LOVING LINKS 020 7602 8727. Info line 0906 550 1361– www.lovinglinks.co.uk – Discreet dating at the speed of E-mail.

RESPECTABLE SINCERE MARRIAGE-MINDED THAI LADIES seek like-minded gentlemen. Free brochure/ video. "Lawrence Lynch – dream weaver" (Louis Theroux BBC). 01562 748600 (24hrs). www.thai-professional.com

MAKE INTERESTING NEW FRIENDS UK/WORLDWIDE. Free details. DESTINY HEART (Dept PE) PO Box 10, Leeds, LS12 1YZ.

CHAT ROOM 25P/MIN. 100+ girls online 24hrs. JCG, tn219dz, 09062 765 264.

CONTACT GENUINE SINGLE WOMEN & MEN ONLINE 24hrs. 60p/min, JCG, tn21 8xz – 09063 620246.

CONFIDENTIAL CONVERSATIONS! Intimate discussions with broadminded women – 0909 109 1236. Calls £1 per min at all times. Halcyon, 21 Princes Street, NN6 OLL.

PASSIVE DOMESTICATED MEN MAKE GOOD LOVERS! Become happy, feminised and sexually fulfilled. Visit www.frocked.nu – or listen to 0909 690 0078. Calls £1.50 per min (no lengthy intros). SX, Box 121, TW8 OEW.

EYE LOVE

MELLOW MALE, 60, with time to spare, loves music, the sea, countryside, WLTM bright, tactile female for discreet relationship. Photo appreciated. London/Essex. Box 1651.

INSUBORDINATE ARMY OFFICER seeks conduct unbecoming from classy babe. Box 0351.

MAN, 42, SOLVENT, WEALTHY SOON. I always call when I say I will. I give spontaneous gifts. I listen clearly and I write love poetry when moved. And I adore women's boxing. Box 0951.

GORGEOUS, CAPRICIOUS, goddess, 40's, seeks intelligent, imaginative, ironic, individual to adore. SW. Box 0851.

WARM, WITTY WIDOWER, musical, Welsh Borders, early 60s seeks bubbly, cuddly lady for final(?) fling. K452lover@yahoo.co.uk

LONDON MALE, 28, RECENTLY HEARTBROKEN. Seeks older woman for physical adult fun and rehabilitation. Write or email. james_jim_lasker@hotmail.com

TALL 48 YEARS OLD, SOLVENT, DIVORCED, CAMBRIDGE SINGLE FATHER – seeks mentally and physically stimulating female. Marital status, age, looks not important but should be energetic, broadminded and with sexual needs and desires longing to be fulfilled in a non-stifling passionate relationship. Cambridgeshire/East Anglia. Contact box 1951 OR opalseal@hotmail.com

LONDON LAWYER (50) seeks free spirited woman for fun and friendship in an uncomplicated relationship. Box 0451.

PASSIONATE GUY, 36, married, attractive – seeking romantic soul to help him unravel life's rich tapestry. Box 0551.

WELL TRAVELLED EX-JUNKIE (40) seeks divine enchantress for third go at life. South East. Box 0450.

KIND, ATTRACTIVE, EDUCATED, DEEPLY MODEST, CHEERFUL, attached male 46 WLTM appreciative, compatible female for fun, friendship and love. Interested in art, music, theatre, travel, wine and food. Box 1250.

WANTED – WOMAN WHO DOES NOT USUALLY TAKE CHARGE, but who would like to! Box 0150.

LADIES RAINWEAR ENTHUSIAST – M52, good looking, divorced – wltm female with similar interests for romantic & fun times. Possible long term relationship? paulvc69@yahoo.com or Box 1150.

MATURE, WOULD-BE MASSEUR WLTM unattached would-be masseuse – mature or immature – for hands-on relationship. edwardian14@hotmail.com

HAPPY, ATTRACTIVE, SINGLE PROFESSIONAL BLACK LADY, 30. Slim, 5'4", seeks professional kind, sincere, single gentleman aged 28-35 for 1-to-1 committed relationship. Photo appreciated. Box 1151.

LOOKING FOR LONDON LADY with longing for lapping at fountain of youth (well... thirties!) E-mail mmmasseur@hotmail.com

LOOKING FOR LOVELY, ATTRACTIVE LADY – late thirties, early forties – who loves dining out, laughter, travel and wants to meet prof male, very solvent, non-smoking, single, GSOH – with plenty of spare time. Where you live is not important. Photo very much appreciated. Box 0151.

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN SEEKS ADORATION from affluent man. London Box 0251 or thegoddess_from_hell@hotmail.com

SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN seek adventurous lady for occasional luncheons, matinees etc. Box 1051.

HARDWORKING PROFESSIONAL MALE, 40, attached – seeks attractive, intelligent female for exciting times. Box 1951.

WORKING ARTIST/ CRAFTSMAN/ TEACHER, 40s, seeks studious younger woman who would enjoy the company of a considerate, generous, older man, anywhere. Box 2051.

MANOLO BLAHNIK. YOU LOVE TO WEAR THEM, I love to buy them. Retired company director, fit and frolicsome, wishes to pamper and be pampered by smart-shoe girl. If you are that person please write, enclosing photo (of shoes!). Box 1451.

ATTRACTIVE, INTELLIGENT, TALL, SLIM FEMALE, early forties WLTM similar unmarried gentleman for evenings, some week ends company and entertainment in London – Cathy2002ad@yahoo.co.uk

MALE – VERY GOOD LOOKING, FIT, SHARP, WITTY, always good fun – expert at Kama Sutra, but unused at present, seeks willing female. Box 2251.

PINK EYE

ATTRACTIVE, LOVING GUY, forties, Hampshire, seeking younger guy for hot summer. Long term forecast possible. Box 1251.

Is 19p too much to invest to find your lifetime partner?

By return of post we will send you details, in complete confidence, of people we think could be ideally suited to you!

What sort of people join a dating agency like Dateline? Well actually, it's people just like you!

In fact recent research reveals as many as 1 in 5 unattached men and women turn to dating agencies to start relationships. And the researchers say this figure is set to DOUBLE over the next five years!

Social patterns and trends have simply changed making the age old role of the matchmaker more relevant than ever.

More and more people are joining from all over the country – from villages, market towns and cities. The problems of meeting people are not confined to any particular locality. The backgrounds and occupations of Dateline members are equally varied – GP's, surveyors, solicitors, engineers, surgeons, journalists, teachers, secretaries, stockbrokers, nurses, chemists, receptionists, bus drivers and even zoo keepers. Looking for a partner is not confined to any class or category.

What all Dateline members have in common is a considerate attitude towards meeting new people.

How does Dateline work?

You choose the sort of people you want to meet yourself! After completing a comprehensive questionnaire your information is carefully compiled and the matching process, in which your data is compared with that of every other member begins. The most compatible matches will be found and their details forwarded to you immediately. Your details can likewise show up on matches from other members and they will contact you, and so a whole new social life begins.

Dateline also has a member's helpline open during the day, evenings and at the weekend.

A few documented Dateline experiences.

"a few more letters passed between us and then she phoned me" – "It was a wonderful phone call – absolutely brilliant". "I can certainly say that it was the best thing I've ever done!"
A.H. Derby

"when we tell people how we met, they all think it's a great idea! I just wanted to meet a kind and caring person – and I did!"
J.C. Lancs.

"I actually asked Karen to marry me on the third date" – "All my friends at work said I was stupid – until they met Karen of course!!"
G.C. Suffolk

What sort of people join Dateline?

■ **Brian** *is a 53 year old Air Traffic Controller from Dorset. He enjoys dinner parties and the theatre. Brian describes himself as averagely built and attractive.*

■ **Anna** *is a 32 year old Medical Secretary from Reading. A slim and attractive non-smoker who enjoys socialising. She likes to listen to classical and operatic music.*

■ **Malcolm** *is a 44 year old Software Engineer from South London. He describes himself as slim and attractive. He is a non-smoker and enjoys classical music.*

■ **Karen**, *47, lives in Chichester and likes eating out and spending time with friends. She also enjoys jazz music and the countryside.*

The answer seems to be – people like you!

* Names have been changed for reasons of privacy.
Membership restricted to ages 18+ only

Dateline is part of the OneSaturday plc Group of companies

Your Details

Mr ❒ Mrs ❒ Ms ❒

Surname:

First Name:

Address:

Post Code:

Tel No:

E-mail:

Marital Status:

❒ Single ❒ Divorced
❒ Widowed ❒ Separated

Age: Height:

Occupation

Religion:

Build: Attractiveness:

❒ Slight ❒ V. Attractive
❒ Medium ❒ Attractive
❒ Large ❒ Average

Your Personality

tick which traits closely describe you

❒ Affectionate ❒ Fashionable
❒ Serious ❒ Practical
❒ Considerate ❒ Conventional
❒ Shy ❒ Reliable
❒ Romantic ❒ Adventurous

Your interests

Please tick for a liking,cross for a dislike or leave blank for no pref.

❒ Wining/Dining ❒ Jazz/Folk music
❒ Pubs ❒ Classical music
❒ Sports/Keep fit ❒ Theatre/Arts
❒ Politics/History ❒ Watching TV
❒ Reading ❒ Smoking
❒ Travelling ❒ Mixing with friends
❒ Science/Tech ❒ Children
❒ Cinema ❒ Homemaking
❒ Pets/Animals ❒ Gardening
❒ Pop music ❒ Countryside

Your Attitude

tick for yes, cross for no or leave blank if you don't feel strongly

❒ I prefer town life
❒ I involve myself in community activities
❒ I have many friends of my own sex
❒ I am interested in current affairs
❒ I am looking for one special relationship
❒ I like team activities
❒ My work makes it difficult to meet new people
❒ I want to extend my social life as well as finding a special relationship

Your Ideal Partner

Min. age: Max. age:

Height: min. max.

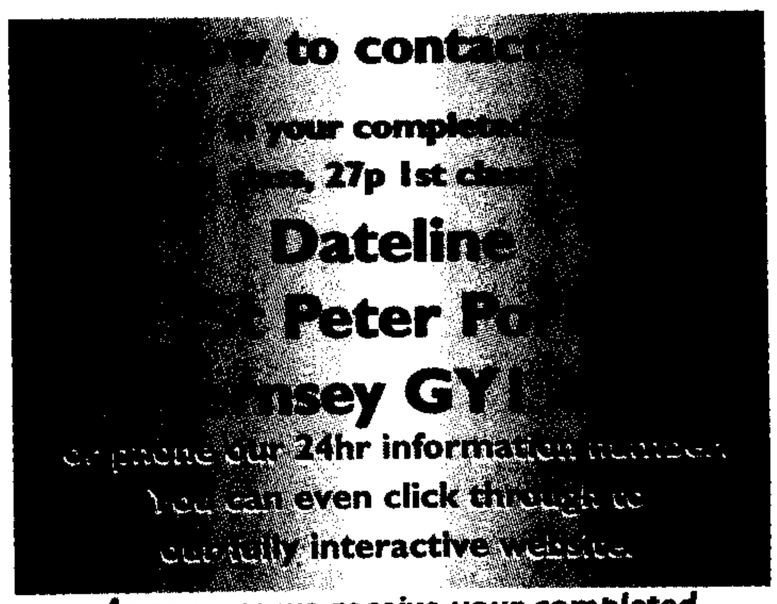
❒ Don't mind

Marital Status:

❒ Single ❒ Divorced
❒ Widowed ❒ Separated
❒ Don't mind

Build: Attractiveness:

❒ Slight ❒ V. Attractive
❒ Medium ❒ Attractive
❒ Large ❒ Average



As soon as we receive your completed questionnaire from this page, we'll immediately send you the name and description of someone who could be YOUR ideal partner – absolutely FREE of charge, in complete confidence and with no obligation whatsoever. So what have you got to lose?

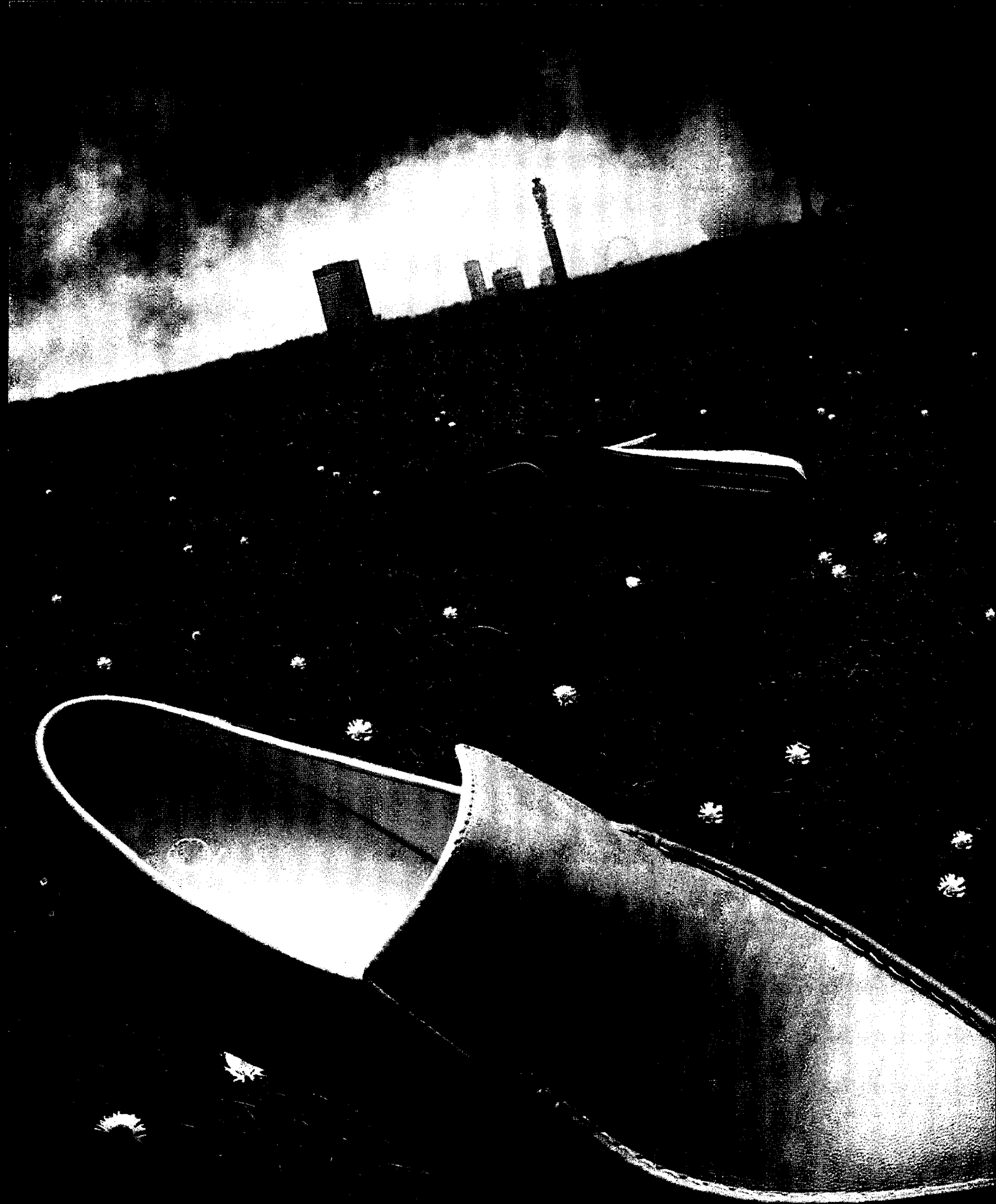
We hope to be able to offer a variety of interesting offers from us and other reputable organisations. However should you not wish us to pass your information to them or to receive these offers, please tick this box. ❒

Dept. PE 91

Instant compatibility test on our interactive website

www.dateline.co.uk

or call our 24hr information line on: 0871 871 8711



Oliver Sweeney